

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Clarion Call To Defeat Modern Revisionism

The torch that was lit in 1917 in the Great November Revolution by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the leadership of the Great Lenin, serving as the beacon-light on the path of advancement of human civilization, is still resplendent before the exploited and oppressed masses of the world. This revolution not only freed the working class, the toiling masses of Russia from exploitation, but opened up a new vista before the exploited masses of the whole world, on the path of their emancipation. The scientific and historical course of advancement of human civilization that had been philosophically established by Marxism, Dialectical Materialism, was translated into reality for the first time through concrete application in the Great November Revolution in Russia. Herein lies the international and epoch-making significance of November Revolution although it was organised in just one country, Russia. Thus opined Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, our beloved leader, while explaining the significance of the Great November Revolution at a meeting at Mahajati Sadan, Calcutta, on 17th November last.

The meeting was organised under the auspices of the West Bengal State Committee of SUCI on the occasion of 71st anniversary of November Revolution. The meeting was held on completion of the 10-day programme laid down by the Central Committee of the Party on 17th November. The spacious Mahajati Sadan was full to the brim even before the scheduled start and the assembled people overflowed onto the pavement outside in hundreds, wherefrom they listened to the speech with rapt attention. After Comrade Pritish Chanda, a member of the Politbureau, took the Chair as
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Withdraw IPKF from Sri Lanka

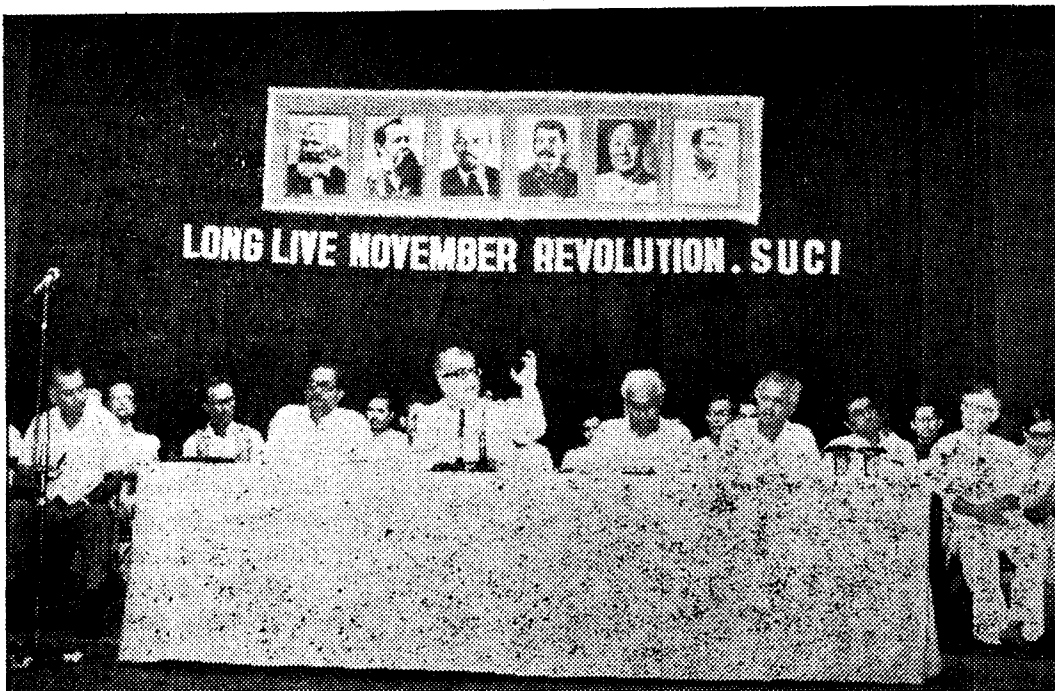
Strongly criticising the role played by the I.P.K.F. in the recently held election to the North-eastern Council of Sri Lanka, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary of the S.U.C.I. in course of a statement said that all these clearly point out to what extent the I.P.K.F. at the behest of the Government of India has been interfering in the internal affairs of that country. Comrade Mukherjee in this connection also severely criticised the reported role of the Research and Analytical Wing (RAW) which was reminiscent of the moves of the C.I.A. of interfering and installing puppet regimes in different countries and warned that this big power chauvinism of the ruling Indian bourgeoisie would surely alienate the people of India from the freedom loving people of the world. Comrade Mukherjee once again reiterated the unequivocal demand of the Central Committee of the party for the immediate withdrawal of I.P.K.F. and R.A.W. personnel from Sri Lanka.

Brave Sukinda miners defy 144 Cr.P.C.

Mines workers of Sukinda held a demonstration and meeting on 25th October at Sukindagarh breaking the undemocratic section 144 CrPC clamped in mining and adjacent areas since 6th September last. To suppress the democratic movement of the miners who have been continuing their struggle for last 8 months against machine mining and on some other legitimate demands the mine owners and the State Congress(I) Govt. have united. But they have failed to break the morale of the fighting people. In spite of repeated demands to lift 144 CrPC from the mining and adjacent areas the Government has been pursuing the policy of repression. So the workers and peasants under the leadership of SUCI organised

demonstration and meeting to exert pressure on the Government.

Com. Jagabandhu Baral, Secretary, SUCI Cuttack District Committee presided over the meeting. Com. Mayadhar Nayak, General Secretary, Sukinda Upatyaka Mines Workers Union addressed the meeting. When Com. Bishnu Dash, Secretary, SUCI Sundergarh District Committee rose to speak the police declared the meeting illegal and arrested about one thousand people including the leaders and workers of SUCI out of four thousand people present in the meeting. Afterwards the police were forced to release them. The meeting has created a new stir among the masses and has strengthened their confidence in the leadership of SUCI.



Beloved General Secretary Comrade Nihar Mukherjee addressing the gathering. To his left senior politbureau member Comrade Pritish Chanda as president.
(Above)

A portion of the gathering at Mahajati Sadan on 17th November. (Below)



On Draft Alternative Education Policy

The demand was being voiced among the people for long : "The criticism of the educationists, academic community and education-loving people against the Government's education policy is all right ; but what should we ask for instead ?" Now, the prospect of its being fulfilled is in the offing. From the platform of a recent All India seminar on education eminent personalities of the three (Northern, Southern and Eastern) Regional Save Education Committees, who also formed an All India Save Education Convention Preparatory Committee under the chairmanship of Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer, released a Draft Alternative Education Policy (DAPE) for a country-wide debate and discussion. After a thorough exchange of views and opinions and through largescale interaction over it among the people concerned with education, the entire body of suggestions, as they declared, will be simulated in the form of a "People's Alternative Policy on Education" to quote Mr. Iyer.

BASIC APPROACH

This Draft Alternative Policy on Education differs from the Government's not only in the body of its specific and concrete recommendations on the various aspects of education system, but also and more particularly, in the very basic approach about education. The Central Government starts from the production-oriented approach—to view the students as the future cogs of the vast production machinery and the expenditure on education as an investment to that end. And in our country there is a wide currency of views among a large cross-section of intellectuals around the idea of production-oriented education irrespective of place, time and condition. As our leader and teacher Comrade Shibdas Ghosh pointed out long back, this scheme of production-oriented education if properly viewed in the present socio-economic context of our country "is solely designed by the ruling bourgeoisie to channelise the entire education on to him of purely informative and technical education... under the pretext of providing a booster to production", that is, to gear the education system to the need of the profit motivated capitalist production system. The object of education being so defined, the scope, content and

conduction of the system are also accordingly decided upon.

The scope of education would be confined to the limited few in accordance with the ever-shrinking quantum and pattern of jobs available in the economy.

The content of education would be designed to create bands of skilled working hands instead of critical thinking brains from among the few who are allowed admission.

The conduction of education system would be done in a way that ensures the fulfilment of these objectives, that is, through the bureaucratic instruments from above in total disregard to what the men concerned with education want or feel.

As against this, the proponents of the Draft Alternative Policy "stand for Scientific, Secular and Democratic Education System" whereby they demand :

"First, the unfettered right and scope of best education up to the highest level for all irrespective of caste, race, language, religion, sex etc.

"Second, the three-fold object of education, namely, to inculcate a scientific, secular and critical outlook, reasoning faculty and logical bent of mind as opposed to supernaturalism, superstition and mysticism ; to foster a democratic app-

roach to life and society rising above the communal and parochial prejudices ; and to cultivate a sense of social obligation, moral values and higher standard of character among the students.

"Third, the autonomy of education, that is, the right of the people concerned with education to formulate and implement the policy and decision on all aspects of education — teaching, curriculum, examination, evaluation, administration, development and recruitment ; as well as the duty of the Government — Central and State both — to bear entire financial responsibilities of education and ensure proper use of the fund. (DAPE, Chapter-A)

It is thus quite clearly evident above that the alternative policy offers a completely and fundamentally different approach on the question of scope, object, content and conduction of education in our country.

Here we intend to make a brief review of how it details these aspects.

SCOPE OF EDUCATION

In relation to the scope of education, the DAPE proposes opening of required number of institutions, provisions of all facilities, sufficient number of teaching and non-teaching staff as well as support programme as and whenever necessary to fulfil universalisation of elementary education (8-year schooling) and maximum possible continuous expansion of education at the successively higher stages so that those who opt and qualify for are not disallowed by seat restriction and other measures.

In opposition to the widespread view that higher education should not be made necessary for all, the Draft argues, the scope should be kept

open for all who desire and deserve. It is implicitly acknowledged that under various situations, compelling or voluntary, a majority of students will not come to the higher education or pursue it up to highest level. But in view of the very poor participation of the students of the relevant age group in higher education in sharp contrast to the country's necessity to pool maximum intellectual resources for the advance of science, technology and developmental planning in the interest of the people, the proposers of the Draft have put forward the suggestion for continuous expansion of education—both vertical and horizontal.

The Draft does not see any contradiction on quantity and quality of education. Quality can be improved while expanding education, given the necessary desire. Quality may fall even with a fewer number of students, if that be the policy of those who decide. Moreover, the heightening of the standard of education is related as much with the physical inputs as with the general social commitment of the teachers and students, and the latter object cannot be achieved through the commercialisation of the motive of learning, teaching and management—a motive so glorified in the government's education policy.

Nor does the Draft take for granted any conflict between universalisation of elementary education and expansion of higher education. Given a limited fund, it will surely be difficult to implement the various schemes suggested. Those who take this situation for granted, start worrying about how both can be attained and raise arguments over "priorities". However, if the wastage of fund in unnecessary defence production and purchase, pay-offs in the international arms-trade, subsidies to the already too fattened business magnates, administrative and ministerial tours and toasts etc. are stopped and a portion of resource is properly channelised for education, there will be no such questions of

laying emphasis upon primary instead of higher education, or vice-versa. It will then be possible education in all areas and levels with equal emphasis.

However, the proposers of the DAPE are not blind to the question of priority of implementation. They have pointed out in clear terms that since "great imbalances and disparity exist in terms of distribution and availability of facilities... between the urban and rural areas, between the affluent and the poor, between the privileged and the deprived communities, between men and women etc.," while carrying the measures for expansion and improvement into effect, "there must be priority of choice in implementation, emphasis, method and pace." (DAPE, Chapter-C).

In another respect also this Draft stands in sharp contrast to the Government's policy—that is in terms of equality of scope. It has opposed the Government's scheme to introduce three types of education for three layers of the population, namely, Model Schools and other quality institutions for the rich and the privileged, ordinarily run institutions for the middle classes and non-formal, open and distance learning for the poor and the deprived. Thus it has delineated equality for all not only in terms of access to education but also of the quality of education provided. It is not merely a question of legal-constitutional formality arising out of the exigency of a political democracy ; it has emerged in history as a liberal humanist approach to education of the larger masses for their material wellbeing and spiritual rise.

OBJECT & CONTENT OF EDUCATION

As we have already noted, the object of education being differently formulated, the content of education at different levels has also been differently framed. Few notable features are discussed below.

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AN UNABASHED PLEA OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION FOR EXPORT

Even men of very reticent nature, sometimes, in some carefree moments, become talkative. The musing in their silent thought, or their soliloquy takes the form of verbose articulation. Blessed are the creatures that happeneth to be present at the right hour. The mouth may immediately shut, prudence and judgement taking the better of them.

Such an occasion, fortunately, presented itself before us during the light and sound of the Autumn festivities. A retired official of the Defence Ministry, Government of India, freed from the service conduct rules, spoke (or correctly speaking, wrote) quite eloquently, and with total frankness, in an English daily, on—can you imagine on what?—on why the Defence Budget in India is earmarked so high and how to counterbalance its evil consequences on the economy. (*Arms From India*—G. C. Katoch; *The Statesman*—18-19 October 1988)*

ENDLESS TALK TO CONDITION THE PEOPLE

You think, do you, that this is an old cassette you have to listen to? "National security", "danger of foreign aggression", "alien conspiracy to destabilize the polity" etc. etc. — the routine outcries of the ruling class? But no! This ex-officer indulges in no such illusions. He rather observes: "*Endless talk of the security environment, Defence preparedness, needs of modernization and lately, India's regional power status have conditioned the country into believing*" (have you noted the phrases?) "that a big Defence budget is not only nice to have but something we cannot do without. It looks as if for a long time to come we are stuck with the present size of the armed forces and the necessity to keep them well-equipped and well ahead of the Joneses next door." Naturally, "with modern weapons system getting costlier by the day, Defence imports will rise in value." So, you see, he talks on a different subject in a different tone.

There are many valuable information in this write-up: "The amount of foreign exchange spent

on Defence imports is not disclosed; nor are we told what part of the amounts budgeted for buying weapons and equipment relates to imports." Consequently, "the impact of Defence imports on the foreign exchange situation has received scant notice." However, the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) calculated the arms imports bill of India during 1982-86 to be Rs. 12,600 crores of which 1986 alone accounted for Rs. 3,920 crores—18.3 per cent of India's total imports and 37.4 per cent of Defence spending for that year. Thus, "the ACDA's estimate for 1986 implies that as much as 88 per cent of the amounts classified under the head "stores" in the Defence budget represented imports", and although he accepts the implication of this estimate—namely, duplicity of records, he corrects the data with an "educated guess" of 60 per cent.

What are the consequences of this Defence imports burden on our "economic shoulders"? It has raised "out borrowing requirements", the article shows, to "a staggering 8.4 billion dollars a year" including an "annual debt service burden of 5.1 billion dollars" for the next three years, as estimated by the World Bank, for which still newer "sizable commercial loans" are "being planned" from "the international market" and as

a result our country is "heading towards a debt trap" with "a serious foreign exchange crisis".

In face of such a grim prospect of the economy, the article rightly points out: "Economic realities can, however, be ignored up to a point. There is brave talk of boosting exports by 20 per cent or more a year. But every one knows there are serious constraints that cannot be wished away." What those serious constraints are and why those cannot be wished away—the officer, however, did not tell us. Anyway, after reading those well-worded paragraphs it was but natural to expect a proposal for a reduction in arms purchase and a squeeze in the Defence Budget—as even the Ninth Finance Commission has also reportedly advised the Central Government.

But no! Arriving at this crucial point the officer makes a skilful dodge and asks a queer question: "Can anything, then, be done to see that the burden of military imports rest less heavily on the country's economic shoulders?" In other words, the question boils down to this: Arms imports having been taken for granted, cannot the money be collected from a non-refundable source?

SELL MORE TO BUY MORE

Surely such a source can be none other than some foreign buyers. "One obvious field", he therefore shows, "in which some vigorous rethinking is called for is military exports." Citing examples of Brazil, Israel etc, he urges the Indian Government which already sells Rs. 10 crores per year on the average, to increase its arms exports, particularly to the Third World market. Yes, yes! Why should we only purchase, and others sell to us? Now we are also grown up, ours is an adult state! It should also join

the arms trade and sell more to buy more!!

Our foreign office preaches peace and disarmament, opposes war and aggression, talks of non-alignment? So what? All these are "phony"—he curtly declares and then comments: "A country which maintains the fourth largest Army in the world (and in doing so keeps the arms factories of other countries busier than its own) need hardly be squeamish about exporting some of its own products." What a straightforward argument: Why doesn't India keep her own arms factory just as engaged to produce weapons for other countries?

Quite purposefully he refers to the fact that "for nearly a generation India has been exporting small arms to "friendly" countries. We are not thus really averse to military exports to principle." Who says we are? A UN study in 1985 revealed that India was the biggest exporter of middle order weapons among the 3rd World countries. Hence, "the proposition that we export more arms to buy more arms is not so preposterous...". As to the "tiresome delusion" about the "mantra of non-alignment" he is abrasively outspoken: "If countries like Switzerland and Sweden can sell arms in a big way without losing their neutrality, how would this violate India's non-aligned chastity?"

Indeed, — how would it? If India can claim a leading status in the non-aligned bloc even while remaining blind and mute at the big powers' aggression on its member nations; even after she took over military guardianship of Sri Lanka, Maldives etc. in the name of helping them to solve their domestic problems, which actually betray the Indian rulers' ambition for "regional-power status", how would her joining the arms dealers' club violate the principle of "non-alignment". Only

one pointer might be adduced as a precaution: in her arms trade India should check against any preferential treatment to the members of a particular bloc; that's all!

AMORAL (OR IMMORAL) FLEXIBILITY — FOR SHADY DEALS?

Questions of morality and conscience have also been looked into by this author and brushed aside as impractical fancies. "Wars and military clashes are", he assures us, "a fact of life on this planet. Nor are all wars evil." So, as long as there are war tension and possibilities, make the most out of the arms business and don't bother whether your purchase and sale of arms precipitate or accelerate any confrontation on any borders—yours own or others! Moreover, the Third World countries, which always feel unsafe in the midst of big powers' rivalry and threats of aggression, continuously purchase arms and weapons for their national defence. "What is morally wrong with supplying them with military hardware if they can pay for it? If you don't, someone else will." So look at the arms market from the economic point of view, not from the moral standpoint! Since "there is a demand not only for our small arms and ammunition and explosives but also for items like field guns, helicopters, trainer air craft, even the Indian made Jaguar," "the Vijayanta Tank", "the Arjun", "the Prithvi Missile" as well as "humbler non-lethal goods for military use such as transport and lift vehicles, patrol boats, communications and engineering equipment, clothing and leather ware, parachutes etc.", we should explore the military market with this wide variety of commodities!

Once stripped of all value-judgements it becomes easier to face the fact that "the world of arms peddling has its murky sides". "Arms sold to safe parties might end up in the wrong hands." For examples, some years

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* All quotations here and hereafter refer to the above article unless otherwise stated—Ed. P. Era.

Militarisation of Economy

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ago "90 Centurion tanks disposed of by us" found "their way to South Africa". Recently, "60,000 of Lee Enfield rifle", loaded overboard for a safer shores, "landed up in Karachi". But with "the best of precautions, such mishaps do occur", and so, "there is no point in howling over them". Really! Had these mishaps not occurred, the two parties referred to above (and similar parties in other similar mishaps) would have surely done their shopping from other sources and we would have lost these shares of the market! Similarly, "end user certificates... can also be manipulated", "kick-backs" are "to be paid and other allurements offered for winning contacts, shady agents used for bribing your way," etc. Looked at from this angle, all the scandalous episodes centring round the purchases of Bofors guns, West German Submarines and Japanese helicopters appear to be natural incidents and it is no wonder if the hands of the Government are besmeared with dirt and grease of the business!

And he justifies all this with a simple sermon: "Rigid moral postures are fine, but a little amoral flexibility might serve the national interest" (read—arms trade interest) "better", because, "promoting the sale of arms in foreign lands is not like setting up a grocery shop. Much of the work has to be of an unorthodox nature, in the twilight zone, so to speak."

EVERY PARABLE HAS A MORAL, — AT THE END

After learning all the lessons relating to arms trade, we are confronted with an obvious question: What do we stand to gain by speeding up arms exports? This ex-official has considered that too, and charted a list of "benefits" as follows: "Easing the pressure on balance of payment", "a high level of defence production:...

making the arms for our own use cheaper", "a vast increase in skilled jobs, growth of Defence related ancillaries, strengthening of the industrial and technological base, stimulus to R and D activity and...". And here our officer, a typical bureaucrat, suffering from the trauma of inter-departmental cold war, delivers an oblique shot at a "bonus" to our "the Foreign office mandarins" with the plea that arms exports, as efforts, would also lead to "the extension of our political influence in strategic areas."

Mr. Satish Dhawan, the former Secretary of Space Research has pointed out: "Militarization of science drains the treasuries, weakens the economies and distorts science and human values", and so, "military dominance over scientific knowledge and technology will certainly deprive developmental activities of essential funds." *Times of India*, 8 August 1988).

But all these objections should be overruled by a practical minded Defence Ministry as irrelevant from the economic viewpoint. It should deduce a "more mature policy" for recruitment of agents to explore market for Indian weapons, "earmark" at least "fifty per cent of the output" of the ordnance factories "for export" and hence try to "step up production by taking up the slack and creating fresh capacities".

In the wake of these recommendations, the officer ultimately gives away who his clients really are. Since the existing manufacturing capacity of the ordnance factories is not enough for as wider a market as envisaged, he thinks, "better co-operation of private industry has to be sought." But what if the private monopolists do not dare to take the risk in such a new venture? "The Government must also agree to tax concessions and subsidized inputs to make the products internationally competitive."

So the quintessence

of this entire brief turns out like this: The Indian state should take initiative to capture a bigger share of the world's arms market, enhance defence production, boost up ancillary industry as well as encourage private houses to join the arms race, allow tax-rebates and subsidies on their production-for-export and in the process, extend India's sphere of influence over the Indian sub-continental region as much as possible;

* * *

MILITARIZATION OF ECONOMY: A MILITARY MEANS TO RESUSCITATE CAPITALIST ECONOMY

After all this is seen, read and studied, some comments become necessary: what does this unashamed advocacy for arms exports aim at? Why is it felt so urgent? Usually, whenever the issue of big defence budget has been debated in our country, the ruling class and its political spokesmen have always pleaded national security, danger of foreign aggression etc. in purely chauvinistic terms. This is a rare example where we have a person descending from the higher echelon of power who cynically rejects such slogans as "conditioning" effort, derides at the policy of non-alignment as a "mantra" and "phoney", defends the shady affairs of the arms business with the logic of "amoral flexibility" and argues for extension of political influence over other countries as a "bonus" to arms export.

Readers of *Proletarian Era* may well remember that it was our party, the SUCI, which under the illumining guidance provided by Com. Shibdas Ghosh, a great Marxist thinker of the era, analysed the foreign policy of the Indian bourgeois state and pointed out the class motives of Indian bourgeoisie behind all its slogans of non-alignment and peace etc. The Theses on National Situation, adopted by the First All India

Congress of the SUCI (25-29 March, 1988), also notes: "The initiative taken by India long back along with some other countries to organise the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) had as its objectives, *firstly*, to attempt to penetrate into the markets of the comparatively less developed non-aligned countries, and, *secondly*, to enhance thereby her own bargaining power in the matter of securing concessions from both the imperialist and the socialist countries." (p. 52) Thus, this policy, far from being "phoney", stems from the same definite class objective as prompts this officer to plead for arms exports.

Similarly, our party also reiterated another point in the same theses: "The other noteworthy aspect of the Indian bourgeoisie is that it has already become imperialistic. This is being manifested more and more pronouncedly through its big-power chauvinistic attitude and behaviour in dealings with the neighbouring countries as well as its expansionist tendencies and moves..." (p. 54). Recent developments in the Indian sub-continental region involving India have clearly vindicated the truth of this analysis. The arguments of this officer for the "regional-power status" of India, and for "extending influence" in "strategic areas" also reveal the same truth from the bourgeoisie's side.

Another significant feature of this article is its insistence on arms production and exports. What does it signify? Earlier, as we all know, capitalism - imperialism, with the accentuation of the crisis of market resorted to military aggression for forcible annexation of newer territories as additional market and geared the economy to feed the war machine. But later, particularly following the Second World War, in the midst of the third phase of general crisis, war and war business have become major safety valves for capitalist economy. As our most beloved leader and teacher Comrade Ghosh had observed in a

meeting in 1967, "...when they cannot increase production in the normal course by way of adequate industrialisation, an urge for production of armaments, a tendency of militarisation of the industries appears in the economies of all capitalist countries... to create an artificial stimulation in the market by this measure, even if temporarily... What is meant by this militarisation of industries? It means that the Government places orders and the Government itself buys up the products. Only, the Government's military budget keeps on increasing... And since it does not have to depend on the market or purchasing power of the people, the economy can be protected to an extent from the mounting pressure of recession for the time being... But the Government, too, cannot buy up these materials and stock them endlessly and without purpose. Therefore, to release the war materials, they need local and partial wars. This basic economic feature is giving rise to crisis one after another which are at the root of the present war policy." (*The Post-Second World War International Situation and Lessons of the November Revolution: Selected Works*, Vol. 1 pp. 255-56)

In the light of this brilliant analysis of Comrade Ghosh's the First Congress of our party explained the class significance of the measures already taken by the Indian Government — which this officer emphasized with greater zeal: "To help the capitalist economy to overcome its crisis because of shortage of the market the Government of India is resorting to artificial stimulants. On the one hand, it is helping the capitalists with huge subsidies, subventions and tax-concessions, enabling them thereby to sell their goods on the foreign market at rates even cheaper than in the home market, and on the other, by increasing the military consumption. The ever increasing military consumption is being utilised not only to feed the existing productive

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Gorbachev's attempt to disarm working class

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President, the meeting began with the DYO music squad presenting a song on Great Lenin and then the Internationale.

The main speaker, our beloved General Secretary Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, said in his speech that the success of the Great November Revolution was due to the correct and creative application of Marxism-Leninism. Marx had said that the philosophy of dialectical materialism would become concretised through the proletariat; and through grasping this philosophy, the proletariat working class would get hold of the invincible ideological weapon in the struggle for emancipation, not only theirs but of the whole mankind. This teaching of Marx got its first concrete expression through the Great November Revolution.

In the process of evolution and revolution through which human civilization has developed over ages, there have been many a social revolution prior to the November Revolution of 1917. But the fundamental difference between the November Revolution and those revolutions is that whereas all earlier revolutions had replaced one exploitative system with another and kept intact the rule and exploitation of the majority by the minority, the November Revolution was the first in the history of civilization to establish rule by the majority in place of rule by the minority through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

November Revolution shook and scared the capitalist-imperialists the world over. It razed to the ground the false propaganda being conducted by the bourgeoisie for so long that the idea of illiterate workers and peasants wielding state power through using Marxist philosophy as the ideological weapon was an impractical and utopian concept. That is why the imperialist and other reactionary forces of the world had en bloc swoop-

ed down upon the infant Soviet socialist State to destroy it. Many a complex problem confronted the Soviet State, an extremely backward and vast country comprising many nationalities and many religious-ethnic groups at that. Moreover, there were internal and external conspiracies galore against it. In the midst of all this, the victory had to be consolidated by solving the serious problems one by one. The Soviet socialist State could make a headway in the face of every obstacle, adversity and attack because it was endowed with invincible Marxism and a leadership like that of Lenin and Stalin.

From a perusal of the history of the Great November Revolution, we find that there were attacks against it during the period of revolution as well as during consolidating the socialist State stage by stage in its onward advance. And such attacks came not only from the branded capitalist-imperialists but also in the name of Marxism from within the Marxist movement itself. During his lifelong struggle, Great Lenin had to direct the most intense ideological struggles against the pseudo-Marxists. In fact, the practice of attacking Marxism in the name of "socialism" started from the time of Marx himself and has continued ever since.

As you know, socialism and even communism was discussed and talked about even before Marx. But all those were ideologies springing from personal, subjective thinking of this or that particular philosopher. That is why those were unrealistic, utopian concepts. In the history of civilization it was Marx who for the first time held aloft the concept of scientific socialism. He showed that the whole material world is governed by laws; in Nature and in society, some definite law is acting behind each occurrence and every change. When the society has advanced a new social order has replaced an earlier

one, that too has come about being governed by definite laws and in continuity with some definite historical process. But Marx did not stop there. He said that it was not sufficient to explain the world, the necessity was to change it. So, by laying bare the laws governing society and social progress, Marx showed that social change would have to be accelerated by grasping the laws and consciously acting upon them, and that the proletariat working class, the most revolutionary class in the present era, would have to usher in through revolution a new society free from exploitation of man by man. Marx and Engels declared in the Communist Manifesto in unambiguous language that communists want to totally uproot the present social order as emancipation of man and advancement of civilization cannot come about otherwise.

When the bourgeoisie attacks Marx's theory of class struggle, he replied that class struggle was no new discovery of his; long before him, bourgeois historians and economists had shown by detailed analysis like dissection in anatomy that there were classes, class-divisions, class contradictions and class struggle in the society; what he had proved was that the dictatorship of the proletariat was indispensable in order to put an end for all time to class-division, class struggle and exploitation, oppression of man by man, and even the dictatorship of the proletariat was a conditional phase; when the society would eventually attain the stage of communism—only then would class-divisions be no more there and class struggle disappear and hence the State as an instrument of coercion would cease to exist.

Comrade Mukherjee said that this scientific Marxist concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the State has been corrupted and vulgarised by the modern revisionists. Right from Khrushchov up to the present Gorbachev leader-

ship, the revisionist Soviet leadership have all along characterised the Soviet socialist State as the State of the whole people as if the State is a supra-class entity. But Marxism-Leninism teaches us that even after the capitalist class is overthrown from the state power and the production system, and even after their property is expropriated and their right to property abolished, classes do not disappear in the socialist system nor does class struggle cease. Even after socialist system is fully established in the economy, influence of the old society would still persist in the superstructure which means class and class struggle would still remain. Even under the socialist system, so long as the society does not attain the stage when the difference between the towns and the countryside, between physical and mental labour, between the workers and the peasants and between the two sexes are not obliterated, classes and class struggle would remain which means that the State too would exist and that State cannot be anything else than the dictatorship of the proletariat. That State exists means it exists as the State of this or that class. Because the bourgeoisie are hypocrites, they conceal the truth that the bourgeois democratic State they wax eloquent about, is in reality the dictatorship of a handful of capitalists over the majority masses. But communists are not hypocrites, they are votaries of truth. That is why they openly declare that in socialist system, the State is run by the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, the dictatorship of the vast majority of the working people over a handful minority of capitalists. Because, by grasping the laws of social development they have understood that society and civilization cannot be freed from exploitation and advance without this intermediate transitional phase of dictatorship of the proletariat.

Discussing the policy of *Perestroika* currently being pursued by the pre-

sent Gorbachev leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee said: In support and justification of his programme of *Perestroika* or restructuring, Mikhail Gorbachev is talking about various problems besetting the Soviet economy, society, culture and the lives of the Soviet people like stalemate in production, inflation, attitude of idleness and the desire to earn without working for it etc. What do these indicate? These crises in the Soviet society are similar to those that have appeared in the worldwide crisis-ridden capitalist economy—crises that can in no way be solved by this decadent, moribund capitalism. How could signs of these appear in the Soviet socialist system? During Stalin's time, there had been no traces even of such problems! We know, such crises are the outcomes of the revisionist line launched by the Khrushchov leadership at the 20th Congress of the CPSU. So, to solve such problems, they have to turn away from the revisionist line and return to the true socialistic path. But the present Gorbachev leadership is moving in quite the opposite direction. What he is poised to do in the mills and factories in the name of "self financing" and "self management" and the steps he is taking to go back to co-operatives in agriculture would aggravate the crises instead of removing them and would endanger further the socialist system itself. Yugoslavia offers a clear example to this.

Comrade Mukherjee added: Gorbachev is talking about *Glasnost*, that is, "open air". It is all very well. But what has this "open air" boiled down to in practice? In the name of *Glasnost*, perverted bourgeois culture has been allowed to infiltrate at will into the Soviet Union, opportunity is being provided to religious revivalism by allowing ISKCON to pursue its activities and nationality problem is raising head paving the way for bloody fratricidal strifes. We would have appreciated all the talks about "open air" if we

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ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION POLICY

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In the school level, the subjects offered for teaching are: "Mother Tongue, a foreign language (preferably English...), History, Geography (with emphasis on physical geography), Mathematics (with emphasis on Arithmetic) and General Science", at the elementary level, with which some other additional elective subjects like economics, philosophy, social studies, etc. would be introduced at the Secondary stage Chapter-B, I(i) and II(g). Although separate vocational education or course is not opposed, it emphatically pointed out that "there is no question of replacing liberal education by vocational education or vocationalisation of the courses at any level." The implicit logic is easily comprehensible. Already there are thousands of institutes — ITIs, polytechnics, private technical institutes for imparting varying grades of vocational education in different subjects producing certificate holders in typewriting, stenography, TV mechanics, in trades of fitter, turner, lathe, automobile mechanics etc.—who do not find any job ready for them. The gimmick of self-employment has already paled too much in face of the stark reality. People much further from politics can also understand that unemployment is a problem of the economic system and the capitalist economy of our country being enmeshed in inescapable all-round crisis through its ruthless exploitation of the people cannot solve the problem of unemployment. That is why the cry for restriction of education to reduce the number of educated unemployed, to lure away the school pass-outs towards vocational education, self-employment etc. concealing the socio-economic reality and shirking the responsibility of the Government to provide jobs to all. On the other hand, vocational education destroys the

true object of education. Instead of teaching the basic theoretical aspects of knowledge which held to foster a comprehensive outlook about life, society and nature and to develop the personality of man, it seeks to cram the brain of the students with some drab formulae, information and data thereby studying the growth of personality and stultifying the thinking frame of mind. This breeds the ground for regimentation of thinking—which it is the aim of every capitalist State as Comrade Ghosh pointed out, to achieve as fast as possible for its drive towards fascism.

On the contrary, the Draft has stressed teaching basic theoretical education to develop the comprehensive outlook. It has stressed the teaching of languages—of course with sufficient emphasis on literature, as they spelt out on different occasions, it has stressed physical geography, arithmetic, it has asked for cleansing the courses in all subjects and particularly literature and history of the religious, communal and parochial bias.

The necessity to fight the danger of over-specialisation and compartmentalisation of outlook has been highlighted in the Draft. It however did not oppose diversification into different streams of Humanities, Science, Commerce, Medicine, Engineering etc. on and from Higher Secondary level, and the specialisation from Degree level onward. On the other hand it has advised "classwise gradual upgradation" of course at the successive levels, (B-I (i)), introduction of new subjects at the Secondary level (B-II(g)), new courses embracing several disciplines at the PG level (B-IV(e)). At the same time, contrary to the popular belief that with the growth and accumulation of knowledge the syllabus in every subject needs be increased in weight and volume, it has categorically pointed out that

"courses and curricula in all subjects should be updated in conformity with advances in knowledge and relieved of unnecessary burden." (B-IV (d)). The logic is quite simple. Advancement in knowledge does not mean some additional data for subsequent summation. It means either the two things: (i) the earlier knowledge about a problem or phenomenon is either enriched, made more precise and accordingly incorporated, or rejected as wrong and replaced by the new developments; (ii) the accumulation of so many new observations and results as to open a new frontier of knowledge branching out from the existing ones. Thus in none of the cases the syllabus and curriculum in any subject need be necessarily made burdensome and encumbrous.

Another daring aspect of the Alternative Draft in relation to content of education is its approach about secularism. How often Comrade Ghosh had expressed his anguish over the way the terms "secularism" and "secular education" have been distorted by the ruling class of our country turning it into a multi-theocratic policy, thereby fomenting all religious and fundamentalist sentiments among the people of all faiths in general and of the majority community in particular! Perhaps this is for the first time that a body of renowned educationists and intellectuals of all corners of the country have come forward with a bold assertion of the true principles of secular education demanding:

"(a) education shall in no way indulge in religious beliefs; (b) courses of study in all subjects particularly literature and history must be freed from any religious, communal and parochial bias; (c) there will be no institution on caste or communal basis and the Constitution be amended accordingly." (Chapter-B-IV). Far from subscribing to the idea that equates

morality with religion and views secularism as amoral, the Draft considers it an "imperative" for the education system to "inculcate a social awareness, a selfless attitude, a democratic and humanist approach to life" and as one of the means to do so suggests that "the lives and struggles of the great men of renaissance and freedom movement of our country together with those of other countries, too, should be made acquainted to the students" (Ibid). If we accept the great poet Tagore's dictum that "man can learn only from man", it will be easy to grasp the point inherent in the above suggestion, namely, that man can acquire sense of values only from man—of course from those men who had cultivated moral values in their life and character in their own time and struggles.

AUTONOMY OF EDUCATION

As a part of the colonial legacy, the governments of our country ever since independence—both Central and State, had never sanctioned complete autonomy in the field of education. Recently the new education policy of the Central Government as well as certain measures taken by different state Governments have led to complete bureaucratic control of the entire education system by the Central and State Governments. Although some of the non-Congress(I) State Governments are much vociferous about transferring education to the State List in the Constitution and against Central Government's control, none of them is opposed to governmental control in general, provided it is they who hold the reins.

Similarly the rights of teachers, students and employees to organise themselves, protest against the misdeeds of the authorities and governments and launch movement are being snatched away through ever newer

enactments, rules and regulations under various pretexts. The latest, the Hospitals and Other Institutions Bill, 1988 is the sinister most example of such attack. Many new attacks are in the offing in the name of accountability, code of conduct, evaluation, discipline making the system work etc. etc.

In the backdrop of such a situation the DAPE has come out with the firm assertion for complete autonomy of the entire educational process. It has demanded that "the entire decision making authority shall rest on democratically constituted representative academic and governing bodies at all levels of education—starting from primary to higher", that even the IITs, IISc, ISIs etc. should have governing bodies elected by and from among the concerned members and not nominated from above, that the bodies like UGC, CAGE, MCI, AICTE, NIEPA, NCERT, CSIR, ICMR, ICAR, ICSSR, etc. "may function as bodies for transmission of views" among the concerned institutions as well as between them and the Government, and also conduct "periodic review of performance of the institutions to guard against malpractice or misuse of money. But this must not become a plea for interference." (Chapter-B VII(a)). It has not only demanded protection and extension of the democratic rights of teachers, students and employees from the attacks of the Black Autocratic Acts but has demanded the extension of these rights for the teachers, students and employees of the IITs, IISc, ISIs, Central Universities and Government colleges also. (Chapter-B VII(b)). While recruitment to the college and university faculty should be made at the State level, it should be carried out, according to the Draft, by an all university selection committee instead of a State Government appointed commission. (B-VII (c)).

The Alternative is completely opposed to (Contd. on page 7)

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(Contd. from page 6)

the ideas of disaffiliation and segregation of colleges as "autonomous". (Chapter B IV (j)). The reason for this opposition is obvious from the experience of performance of the already existing "autonomous" colleges. They are not "autonomous" at all, as the course, curriculum, method of teaching and examination are all decided by the Central Government through the UGC. On the other hand the idea gives an outlet for trading, privatisation and profiteering in the field of education to the hands of the interested circles. Teachers and students lose their existing democratic rights and the recalcitrant may be easily victimised by the "owner" or "management" with impunity. Simultaneously, it will open the floodgate of corruption in examination and results. Recently the Central Government has become so frantic about disaffiliation of colleges from universities that the CABE in its last meeting in the month of September proposed for reducing the universities to some administrative offices to issue only certificates and lend the seal, naming these as "non-teaching universities". We have to count the number of steps ahead whereupon they will offer us a "non-teaching education system!"

RESPONSIBILITY

While opposing the interference into the autonomy of education and subversion of democratic rights of the teachers, students and employees by the governments in the name of "accountability" etc., the Draft did not fail to note the growing symptoms of deterioration in the sense of responsibilities and discipline among the men in the field of education. "Corruption, favouritism, political lordism and slavishness to ruling parties, all these have taken the ominous dimension of a ubiquitous malady in every

sphere of the society including education." The Draft observed — "And the very forces which constantly engender this malady make it a plea from time to time to subvert the autonomy of education." So it called for developing a powerful socio-cultural movement to create a seething hatred against corruption and "a sense of ethical responsibility to discharge duties countering any kind of pressure." (Chapter-C (2))

"Teachers and students together constitute in every age in all countries the most sensitive and most important force to accelerate social progress. But among them, the DAPE pointed out, "the teachers play the most vital role in educating the students and imbuing them with the sense of social awareness, purposiveness and moral values. So while demanding and fighting for more facilities and better service conditions the teachers... must bear in mind that right and duty go hand in hand and right without duty becomes privilege." (C (3)).

To the students also the Draft highlighted the necessity to acquire a sense of discipline—"not by succumbing to fear of the authority but... as an ingredient of character." It has rightly asserted: "Without character and discipline they cannot justify their struggles for legitimate demands and win moral support of the people at large behind them." (Ibid)

Similarly the employees have also been reminded "they are not simply wage earners, they are associated with a vital process of social change—education", so just as there is no question of surrendering to any pressure and threat, so also they should not adopt the form of movement for achieving demands quite unconcerned to the educational interests of the students." (Ibid)

CONCLUSION

These are some of the major highlights of Draft Alternative Education Policy. There are many other important features which also deserve attention. However, in conclusion we would like to draw attention of the readers to one very vital proposal of the Draft—to institute "a National Commission on Education consisting of representatives from all categories of people concerned with education" which would "hold debates, discussions, seminars, symposia, workshops involving all cross-sections of the society in every corner of the country" over what should be the education policy. "The view of the Government as well as of any other democratic organisation should come under the purview of the same Commission. The consensus that would emerge from such a serious and thorough exercise should form the basis of a new education policy." (Preamble)

The Central Government has remained so far mum to this demand. The way it formulated, adopted and imposed the new education policy bureaucratically upon the people trampling the voice of protest of the education-loving people—not to speak of holding a nation-wide debate-and-discussion, reveals its rabid design to pursue what it feels necessary for the sake of the capitalist class. On the contrary, the proposers of the DAPE, their limited capacity notwithstanding, has already initiated, through the last All India Seminar in Delhi on 14 September 1988, a country-wide discussion, debate, exchange of opinion over the Draft. They have urged all sections of the education-loving people—educationists, teachers, students, guardians—to participate in the process of interaction in various forums and platforms as well as ventilate their views, opinion, suggestion, amendment or criticism over any aspect of the Draft in writing to the Save Education Committees for further improvement of the Draft

before it is given a final shape. Thus the DAPE differs from the Government's policy not only in terms of scope, object, content and conduction but even in terms of the mechanism adopted for its formulation.

Today the mighty waves of the save education movement are surging forward in different parts of the country against the anti-people education policy of the Central Government with a positive alternative of its own and gaining newer momentum every day. In this connection we recall how Comrade Ghosh with grave concern and anguish warned us again and again about the conspiracy of the Indian capitalist class and its representatives to drive the country towards fascism using the education system as the most powerful instrument in their possession. Simultaneously, he pointed out that a powerful movement for scientific, secular and democratic education would pave the way for democratisation and secularisation of the Indian society—an unaccomplished task of the independence movement leaving a formidable snag in the process of the formation of our nation and by developing a democratic awareness, a critical and analytical mental frame, social purposiveness of life and higher standard of character, it would at the same time act as a reckonable deterrent to the fascistic drives of the ruling class. The invaluable teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh on education and education problems will therefore illumine us in further advancing and strengthening the on-going education movement by fighting out all confusions and mistaken ideas in the field of education.

Demonstration by DYO & DSO at Malkangiri

On the occasion of the Demand Day announced by the Orissa State Committee of DYO, a protest rally and demonstration under the auspices of the Malkangiri Sub-Divisional Committees of DYO and AIDSO were held at Malkangiri. With 12-point charter of demands including among others, stoppage of installation of Baliapal Missile Base, cancellation of the New Education Policy, the protesters came from Balimela, Kalimela, Kudumulugumna and other places and assembled before the SDO's office. Later, a meeting was held in the veterinary field under the presidentship of Com. Provas Rout. Com. Sadasiva Das, Koraput District Organiser of the SUCI addressed as the main speaker. Com. Kanhu Biswal and Com. Prafulla Rout of DYO also spoke among others.

Demonstration at Kendrapara

At the call of SUCI, Rajkanika Block Committee, more than five hundred people held a protest demonstration before the SDO office, Kendrapara, on 10th November '88 demanding action against the local Cong(I) MLA who unleashed a reign of terror against the local SUCI workers in connection with the construction of a Girls' High School, reopening of another Girls' High School and handing over of the Bharigada Ferry Ghat to the Gram Panchayat.

In meeting held before the office which was presided over by Com. Jagabandhu Barai, Secretary, Cuttack District Committee of SUCI, the speakers Com. Bishnupada Dash, member of the State Secretariat of the party and others severely criticised the highhandedness of the Congress(I) MLA.

Comrade Mukherjee's Call

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had found that anti-*Perestroika* view too is being given equal opportunity to express itself. But that has not been done. In their anti-Stalin propaganda, the modern revisionists level the charge that the right to express divergent opinion was denied during Stalin's time and opinion of others used to be suppressed. Every student of history knows that as true inheritor and continuator of Lenin, Stalin continued the ideological struggle against the Left deviation of Trotsky and the Right deviation of Bukharin that had been started by the great Lenin, further consolidated socialism, protected Marxism-Leninism against all deviation and corruption and placed it on a firm foundation. In this ideological struggle, those holding opposing views were given full right to express their opinion at the Party Congress held and it was through ideological struggle that Stalin defeated the opposing views. But Gorbachev, while talking so much about democracy, is not willing to accord to the critics of *Perestroika*, to those holding opposing views, the freedom of expressing their opinion. In a meeting on the eve of their 19th Conference, he clearly stated that only the firm believers in *Perestroika* would be allowed to be the delegates to that Conference. And now, even such decisions are going to be taken that in order to become a member of the CPSU, one would henceforth have to have a certificate that he is a supporter of *Perestroika* and no one would be allowed to be a member of any Committee unless he is a supporter of *Perestroika*. Is not such yardstick of conferring party membership totally opposed to Leninist norms? As we understand it, to adopt Marxism-Leninism as the philosophy of life, to abide by the rules and

discipline of the party, to implement the party programmes, to work under and as per direction of an organisation of the party and to pay the party subscriptions regularly—these should be the criteria for eligibility for party membership. So, what does Gorbachev's programme signify, what does he want to usher in? Actually, on his own admission, there is opposition to his *Perestroika* within the Soviet society right from the grass-roots to the highest level and everything is not going his way. Is it because of this that he wants to root out all criticism, opposing views and opposition?

Comrade Mukherjee further said: What the Gorbachev leadership is saying on issues like imperialism-capitalism, war and peace and peaceful co-existence in the name of "new thought" is not only opposed to Marxism-Leninism but is a totally capitulationist way of thinking and a naked attempt to ideologically disarm from within the democratic movements of the workers-peasants-toiling masses and the revolutionary movements from country to country. The internal and foreign policies and activities of Gorbachev leadership are causing apprehension to all true communists and right-thinking well-meaning persons. We are worried: Whither is this leadership taking the Soviet Union?

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee continued: You know, when modern revisionism raised its head from the forum of the 20th Congress of the CPSU and the subsequent revisionist steps were taken, our party had sounded the note of caution right at that time under the leadership of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and held aloft the correct process of ideological struggle against modern revisionism. So, we have at our disposal Marxism-Leninism and its advanced understand-

ing in the post-Lenin period bequeathed to us by Comrade Ghosh. It is our duty to evaluate thoroughly and painstakingly, in the light of these, all the steps being taken by the present Soviet leadership to hold aloft the correct Marxist-Leninist path so that we can move shoulder to shoulder with those who are engaged in struggle against *Perestroika* within the Soviet Union, with the true communists from country to country and succeed in routing through ideological struggle the modern revisionism that is hitting at the communist movement from within. This struggle would free the world communist movement from the pernicious influence of modern revisionism, strengthen the battle against imperialism-capitalism the greatest enemy of civilization and eventually pave the way for further advancement of human civilization through destroying imperialism-capitalism.

Discussing the national situation, Comrade Mukherjee reiterated the party's evaluation of the all-out conspiracy by the Congress(I) government headed by Rajiv Gandhi to bring about fascism in the country and laid stress on building up united movement of the Left democratic and Opposition parties and forces against it. He said: When today, in the context of the problems and all-round crises in mass life, the burning necessity of the movement is to forge unity of the Left-democratic and Opposition parties and forces on the basis of a common minimum agreed programme and code of conduct and to develop powerful, united democratic mass movements parties like the CPI and the CPI(M), while paying lip-service to Leftism and Communism, are in practice creating obstacles in the way of all-out Opposition unity directly or indirectly, have become sunk into the morass of parliamentary politics and as compromi-

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capacity but also as a means to generate a new productive capacity both in public and private sectors. Military industries are being diversified and expanded for meeting the domestic needs, including stockpiling of arms, as well as for exporting the conventional weapons to foreign countries—a trading sphere where the Indian bourgeoisie has

been able to get a foothold in the meantime." (p. 56).

There are some more farfetched designs behind the growing militarization of the Indian state as elaborated by the Theses: "In order to strengthen its class rule and ability to suppress the people's discontent, democratic mass movements and the revolutionary struggles at home and to assume more power to intimidate neighbouring countries in consonance with its expansionist tendencies and attempts to carve out more and more spheres of influence of its own, the Indian bourgeoisie is engaged in building up a huge and most sophisticated military might with all its accompanying paraphernalia. To cover up the motive behind its plan for militarisation in peacetime as also to create a psychosis of national jingoism, the Indian Government is raising the bogey of 'nation in danger' and 'danger of foreign aggression, intervention, conspiracy and terrorism'... All these go to substantiate the objective reality that militarisation is gradually taking more and more share to prop up the Indian capitalist economy." (pp. 56-7).

Comrade Mukherjee reminded all that none of the problems in mass life could be mitigated in this way and called upon the workers and sympathisers of the Left and democratic parties and the people at large to come forward onto to the path of mass movement. He said: Carrying forward the teachings of the Great November Revolution, it is the SUCI that has held aloft the noble banner of Marxism-Leninism, proletarian internationalism, Leftism and democratic mass movement on the Indian soil. Today a historic responsibility has devolved upon our party, the SUCI. The party has got to be developed and strengthened in all respects to become fit for discharging this responsibility so that those who have turned away from the noble ideology of Communism being disillusioned by the activities of the pseudo-Marxists, can again be directed back to the correct path and we are able to fulfil our historical task in the world communist movement.

After Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's speech, the meeting concluded with the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat.

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This retired officer—he is not just an individual writing free lance in the press, but an inmate of the bourgeois system—in course of this inadvertent monologue, in his advocacy for more defence orders to the private sector, for tax-cut and subsidies on their products, for exports of arms to save foreign exchange as well as extend influence etc. not only confirmed the truth of all these analyses of ours to the letter, but, on behalf of the bourgeoisie themselves bared their real class motive behind the entire defence set-up and all glib talks of the national security etc. in an unambiguous language!

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF—COMRADE NIHAR MUKHERJEE

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