

Independence on 15th August and Problems of Emancipation of People

The independence India earned through struggle against the two-hundred year long rule of the British imperialism, did not bring emancipation of people from exploitation. While explaining how with the Indian bourgeoisie usurping political power, the independence proved mere beginning of another exploitative class-rule by them, Comrade Ghosh in this speech, made on the day of independence two decades after, touched upon a score of fundamental issues and questions like the class character of state, relation of government and state or how the revolutionaries must view their participation in bourgeois parliamentary elections, what does law and order really stand for in a capitalist state, like India, why the crisis-ridden Indian capitalist economy tends towards militarization, how should revolutionaries organize their every movement as conducive to revolution and others, with his unique and penetrative Marxist approach.

Since the last twenty years we, on behalf of our party, have been observing the Independence Day as “People’s Liberation Pledge Day”. The question may arise why we observe the Independence Day as “People’s Liberation Pledge Day”.

We do not mean to say that independence of the country has not been attained, neither do we believe that. We think, the country has become politically independent. It cannot be denied that the country has become politically independent despite the weaknesses and limitations of freedom, despite submissive and soft attitude of the rulers of the country to the imperialist rulers, their pro-imperialist policies and compromising attitude toward feudalism and, above all, conduct of the administration in the interest of the capitalist class.

Then why are we observing the Independence Day as "People's Liberation Pledge Day" instead of celebrating it as a festive occasion ? Because, one of the principal objectives of the freedom struggle before the people was the attainment of independence and liberation from all sorts of exploitation. Not only has the state structure and the economic system that has been thrust upon us as a deadweight through the present independence not fulfilled that objective, that aim, but, on the contrary, it has become a great hindrance on the path of fulfilling those hopes and aspirations of the people. And if this hindrance cannot be removed, emancipation of the people from all sorts of exploitation will be impossible.

Indian society is class divided

When we say that the Indian society is class divided, many might consider it a jargon or a pet opinion of the Marxist-Leninists. That the Indian society is not an indivisible whole, nor is it a united Indian nation, but that it is a class divided society is not a fanciful expression of the Marxists.

The toiling people of India, the common masses at the lowest rung — from manual labourers to the educated intelligentsia doing intellectual work — all belong to a class, who are not owners

of the wealth. The ownership of the wealth created or the means of production with which the wealth is created does not belong to them. They are only selling their labour power ; that labour is utilized in production, and production is maintained by that, profit is piling mountain high for the owners, the capitalist class while the masses struggle anyhow to eke out a living. On the other side, is the class which is the owner of the means of production, owner of factories, and which controls trade and commerce. It is to protect this right to run trade and commerce, to run industries, the right to ownership and control over the production system to earn maximum profit that the law and order structure of the country has developed being based on the concept of social justice complementary to the interest of the capitalist class.

This division in the country — division between those in the urban areas who earn their daily living by selling labour and the capitalist class, between peasants, agricultural labourers and the jotedar class or the rich peasants in the villages — this can in no way be wished away. We, the Marxist-Leninists, have not created this division. It has come about following the inexorable law of society. The reactionary bourgeoisie of today and their hired intellectuals cannot brush aside this truth by any fanciful logic. For, every student of history ought to know that Marx was not the creator of the theory of class struggle, it was the bourgeoisie who recognized it during the period of Renaissance. Marx only gave birth to the scientific analysis of the evolutionary development of class struggle and he fathered the theory of “The Dictatorship of the Proletariat” as the only definite culmination of this class struggle.

So, in a class divided society, the meaning of ‘independence’ is different to the exploiters and the exploited, the meaning of the ‘country’s interest’, too, is different. Those who would deny this and who would present a general explanation on ‘national interest’, and ‘independence’ as the interest of the entire country by hiding the truth from the people, are, in my view, either wholly ignorant or are resorting to deception despite knowing all this. They are deceiving the people in spite of knowing everything. The question should be placed before them straightway as to whose interest they mean by ‘the interest of the country’, when in this country of ours, in this class divided society there is the capitalist class on the one hand, and, on the other, the working class — the toiling people, the unemployed, the agricultural labourers, the peasants, the workers and the middle class, the intelligentsia. Law and order are necessary in the interest of the country. If the interest of the country leaves out the vast multitude of people then it boils down to either an interest for an expanse of land and water or the interest of this capitalist class. What have the people got to do with this interest ? But if by ‘country’ is meant the vast sea of humanity, then the law and order in the interest of the country cannot go against the interest of the people, it cannot deceive the people, nor can people be coerced and their legitimate movements crushed ; and protection of the interest of the owners cannot be passed as the interest of the country, protecting the whims of the owners cannot be passed as protecting law and order. The ‘country’ is not synonymous with the owners. Yet, if the version of those who are crying hoarse over legal sanctity is examined then it turns out to be a shameless pleading for the capitalist class, but in the name of the country.

Congress influenced by the capitalist class

In the beginning of the independence struggle the people of our country and a section of the capitalist class had both joined this struggle. Students of history know that a section of the so-called nationalist and patriotic capitalist class like the Tatas, Birlas, that is, a section of the bourgeoisie helped the Congress with money. In this context I would like to recall a warning in the past by Punjab Kesari Lala Lajpat Rai.¹ When a section of leaders, including Gandhiji²

himself, pleaded that if the owners provided funds, that could be accepted in the interest of the country to meet the expenses of the dedicated cadres of the Congress, who carried on propaganda and the movements, because the programmes of the Congress had to be carried on anyway, then Lala Lajpat Rai sounded this warning. He said that the Congress, no doubt, needed funds, but if its leaders took the measure of meeting the expenses of the workers and the party with funds from the owners, then they would be stepping into the trap of the owners. They could never come out of that trap. That warning of Lala Lajpat Rai went unheeded on that day. As a result, the entire activity of the Congress and the Congress leadership got wholly tied to the interest of the capitalist class, and this included Panditji³ and Gandhiji. And however fervent the emotion the common people had about them, this reality can in no way be denied.

The capitalist class joined the freedom struggle with the particular motive of donning the cloak of the patriots. For this they supported the Congress with money. The peasants, the workers, the lower middle class, the students too joined the freedom struggle. The society of this country was divided into these two classes even at that time. The country was divided into *zemindars*, i.e. landlords and peasants, owners, the capitalists and workers even at the time of the freedom struggle. India was not an indivisible whole, neither was this nation a united one. In fact, no nation in history is a united one. This expression that a nation is united has two meanings. It is a unity either in bourgeois interest or a unity of the largest section of exploited masses of the nation, representing the interest of the common people. Whatever the definition of 'national unity', politically, it can carry only either of these two meanings.

Two classes : two objectives

People fought for independence from the realization that unless the British rulers were driven out a social system could not be established in which illegitimacy, injustice and capitalist oppression, oppression perpetrated by the business community, oppression by landlords, oppression by bureaucracy, all these could not be ended for ever, and the society which will create the opportunity for all-out emancipation, which will provide equal opportunity for development of the individual, opportunity of education to all children of all strata, adoption of all measures to maintain public health, and which would bring welfare to people and society through economic development on the basis of an all-out planning, that is to say, which would open the door of all-out progress in the interest of the people could be established.

And the capitalist class, who joined in the independence movement, had an entirely contrary objective. The British imperialists, the foreign capitalists, were taking away all the wealth by sucking the exploitable market comprising fortythree crore⁴ of people of our country. And the national capitalists were their junior partners. Owing to the alien rule they were not getting the opportunity of looting this vast exploitable market and for unhindered expansion of the Indian capital. So theirs was the necessity to get control over the state power, to take over the state machine from the hands of the British rulers. The Indian capitalists did not stand for revolution, nor for a fundamental change of the society. The British would not stay in power, the Indian capitalists would take control of the administration which the British established — such was their object of joining the freedom struggle. The country would be independent and they would take control of that state power. As a result, their supremacy would be established in a market of fortythree crore of people. They would proceed to further consolidate capitalism in India by capturing the state power, and the deadweight of the capitalist rule and exploitation would be thrust upon the people while freedom is trumpeted about in the name of development of the country, in the name of planning for development — such was the evil design and the politics of

the bourgeoisie. And with the aim of achieving this objective in the national freedom struggle, they helped the movement with money.

Evil effects of partition of the country

The country is independent today, whatever be the way it came. Independence has come through compromise, and what have been its evil effects — I do not like to go into a discussion on this. I would say only this much about the grievous harm done to the country due to partition that a great nation, a sea of humanity, the vast multitude of people unified within a geographical boundary has been divided into two by force — it has been artificially converted into two nations, and has been made into two countries. As a result, from the political point of view, even within the respective countries a mentality of enmity between two states, between the two peoples, as also blindness and fanaticism, religious bigotry and the seeds of communal riots which the imperialists had sowed came to be perpetuated. It is one side of the harm done to the people against their will to anyhow achieve independence through compromise. The state structure and the social and economic system established through independence which was attained through compromise after all that sacrifice have been established in the interest of the owners, the capitalists, totally denying the interest of the people. And it is the capitalist class which is the real dictator of our independent and sovereign state. But it was the common people who fought in the independence struggle in our country.

Role of Jawaharlal Nehru in post-independence period

After being ensconced in power, the same Jawaharlal who once in the pre-independence days was heard to say that this regime had no right to exist and that independence had no meaning if such tasks as overthrowing feudalism, adopting measures for welfare of the peasants, providing land to the tillers, taking effective measures for all-out development of the toiling masses were not implemented — he began to sing in a different tune. So, I had observed once after independence about this Jawaharlal that he was a plaything and only an instrument in the hands of the Indian monopoly capitalists. I often said in jest that he was a live microphone in the hands of the Indian monopoly capitalists. It so turned out that he would go on with his rhetorics, his talking of humanism, his loud verbiages while dishonouring the affection and trust which people had for him. The owners let him indulge in tall talks so that he could keep the people inert. And taking that opportunity the owners could safely, without any hindrance, carry on picking the pockets of the poor people and crushing them. Therefore, it is easy to understand that the role Jawaharlal played can be regarded merely as instrumental, a necessity for consolidation of the rule of the bourgeois class. If it were not so, the people would have burst forth after independence. The personality of Jawaharlal kept them placid. The confidence in him kept them lull. They believed, with Panditji around everything would take a turn for the good because Panditji was a good man, an honest person. At least he was not a hireling of the owners. I am not saying that he was a purchased agent of the owners. But whether a purchased man or a confused personality, if he could not revolt against the regime with correct understanding, if he let himself be used only as an instrument in the hands of the bourgeoisie to disarm the struggle of the masses against capitalist exploitation, if he helped in all possible ways to build this foundation of the rule of the owners, then it has to be admitted that his role was inimical to the people, that it brought ruin to them — the question of honesty or dishonesty does not arise.

Illusions of parliamentary elections are to be shed

One thing should be kept in mind regarding the change of government through parliamentary elections. When people get disgusted and resentful against the government, another government steps in through elections. The common people hold some persons to be dishonest, they think that it will bring them good if only the dishonest were removed and in their place honest men were installed. Bourgeois parliamentary politicians resort to this type of propaganda with the object of confusing the people under cover of a 'principle' or 'ideology'. So I would caution the workers, peasants and the common people not to be swayed by this type of deception. Because, through a change of government alone the basic problems of the common people had never been resolved, will never be resolved. Whatever democratic rights may be conferred, whatever laws may be enacted and whatever programmes to provide relief to the people are adopted in the parliamentary system, emancipation of people cannot come about by that. On the contrary, the condition of people would worsen day by day by these.

What does happen when a change of government is brought about in this way without a radical change of the state structure? If honest men come into government that creates further complications because common people have faith in them. If they are confused despite being honest and cannot take to the path of revolution, they have no other options but to objectively act as lackeys of the capitalist class. It is the capitalist system which they have to reform and further consolidate, yet the grievances of people subside for some time at least because people trust them. Hence, the bourgeois rule, the capitalist rule only gets the opportunity to further consolidate itself and build up a firm foundation during the regime of such 'honest' administrators. Thus, Indian capitalism, too, became further entrenched and consolidated under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru. Lenin once said that between an honest and a dishonest priest, the dishonest one is better in a sense, not in the sense that he is the better one because of his dishonesty. He is better because people can easily see through him. But if an honest and confused priest goes on preaching to the people that they suffer because such is their fate or destiny, doing it with the object of keeping them away from the path of revolution, that act does more harm. Why so? Because, people believe him and he goes on teaching them to avoid the struggle against all sorts of exploitation, that very struggle in which lies their emancipation.

Tendency of militarization in Indian economy

The object of winning people's emancipation through the independence movement has not been fulfilled. The country has become independent and a bourgeois state has been established. The capitalist economic base is getting consolidated despite its limitations. And it is because of the capitalist economy and as a result of capitalist exploitation that the purchasing power of the people of this country is declining. In the face of crisis in the world capitalist market as well as the country's internal market and the growing problem of unemployment, Indian capitalism is incapable of mechanizing agriculture to increase agricultural production by carrying out radical land reforms. It is incapable because any attempt to mechanize agriculture on a large-scale would render lakhs of people unemployed at one stroke and it cannot provide jobs to them. This is because the path of unfettered industrialization of the country is blocked. To keep running the already existing industries is itself a big headache for the capitalists. So, in order to maintain the stability of the Indian capitalist economy to an extent, it is becoming necessary to stimulate the market artificially.

To create stimulation in the market by artificial means — what does this mean? This means, when there is no demand in the market in the normal course, the factories, to the extent they are

operating, are to be at least kept running through government orders without depending on the purchasing power of the people. The only way for ensuring this is to increase defence industries, military budget. Now, take this defence production, i.e., production of armaments. It is the government that spends money for producing them and again it is the government that buys up the product. So, it does not depend on the purchasing power of the common people. Thus, in the era of the present intense market crisis, the defence industry is a boon to Indian capitalism. The capitalists cannot backtrack from it. Whether the people of the country get two square meals a day or not, the capitalists have to augment the defence industries. People are given to understand that the country is in danger, that is why this is being done. I say, it is not so much the danger to the country as the state of economic crisis that is the bigger reason. Without militarization, the entire economic base of India will crumble.

Planning is not free from crisis

The steel plants that have been set up to produce steel — it was claimed while setting them up that the economy was advancing. Yet even at that time, we noticed two features in all the plannings. On the one hand, planning for ‘industrial revolution’ was on, and new industries were coming up, on the other, many of the already existing factories were closing down in rapid succession. As a result, on the one hand, employment opportunities were being created for some people, while, on the other, a much larger number of people was continually becoming unemployed losing their jobs. So, from the very inception of the Five Year Plans, these plans, framed to achieve economic progress, were associated with the shadow of a crisis. These plans have always been haunted by a shadow — the shadow of a crisis. What is that crisis? It is the crisis of market.

Suppose, the steel is produced. Now it is to be sold in foreign markets. Because, who will buy it in this country? If there is a demand for new industries, even in the capitalist sense — that is, the capitalists want to produce goods, that means, there is demand for the products in the market, be it within the country or abroad, there is an urge for the capitalists to invest capital — they will want to set up new factories only if this urge or this demand is there, and only then steel can be utilized. But that demand is absent. That demand is absent within the country for three reasons — growth of unemployment, low wages of the workers and inability to carry out radical land reforms. Because of these three reasons the market in the country is getting squeezed continually, and the purchasing power of the people is going down. Again, there are many competitors in the foreign markets. There Indian capital cannot compete with them in production capacity. Besides, newer and newer countries which attained independence recently are also coming into competition. So there is competition with the powerful capitalist countries as well as with the newly independent ones. So the foreign markets, too, are not very alluring, and, therefore, this all-round crisis of capitalism.

Provocative propaganda of the capitalist class

If there is no market abroad and if an internal market too cannot be created to some extent then what would happen to the steel that is being continually produced ? The steel would stockpile at once, the shifts would close down, the steel plants at Durgapur, Bhilai and Rourkela, etc., would have to face closure. That is why this beating of war drum. War is to be waged, that means, artificial stimulation is to be created in the market by increasing the military budget — the government would itself consume a part of the steel produced as the buyer. Besides, the government would try to rescue to some extent the engineering industries by placing orders. The

Indian capitalists cannot do without creating an artificial stimulation in the market in this way, increasing the military budget and defence industries for this purpose. Yet, here, on the one side, the government leaders are flying doves for peace and on the other side the people do not get food, the country is teeming with unemployed and capitalists do not have even the capacity to pay unemployment allowance as is done in the Western capitalist countries. Hordes of people are getting unemployed, there is no capacity to implement land reforms. In this situation, how can they advocate production of arms and increasing defence industries ? That is why, the bogey is being raised that the country is in danger. This is a dangerous intoxicant. Everyone of us loves the country. The very mention of 'country' excites us, we are very emotional. But I say, if we allow our judgement to be clouded in this way so that we get confounded again and again by the provocative propaganda of the capitalists and dance to their tunes then we would never be able to see through their design and it would become difficult to conduct this struggle for emancipation.

Because, the Indian capitalists cannot do without continually increasing the military budget in the face of the present economic crisis, it is seen that the capitalist leaders and their agents are always trying to keep alive an apprehension of future warfare even at a time of total peace. The idea is, as if, we are about to be devoured ! There is no certainty who will gobble up India and when ! So the budget for defence industries cannot be reduced, rather it is to be increased continually. The crux of the matter is that the policy of artificially stimulating the market is to be kept in force. Indian capitalist economy too is gradually leaning toward militarization in the bid to save itself from the all-out crisis in trade and commerce.

Crisis in US economy

For example, the whole structure of the US economy is standing on quicksand. It is anyhow surviving by creating local and partial wars here and there throughout the world. They have termed such military brigandage in other countries as fight for peace. But students of economics know, peace is their grave, their death. They must have war here and there with this or that country, local or partial war, even if not a world war. So the democratic USA of Abraham Lincoln has stepped into the path of international brigandage. Why so ? Because, the problem facing them is even graver. They have no market. But they have surplus capital. Capital cannot remain idle. If it does, the economy is subjected to inflationary pressure. So they are investing capital in continual augmentation of armaments through militarization of the industries. Again, if the armaments keep on stockpiling then signs of recession will appear in these industries, too, which would become sluggish. The entire country would seethe with unemployment. As such, unemployment is already increasing in the USA. So they must have a war. Spying on behalf of one against another, or to incite one against another, to pass information of one to another or *vice versa* — it is this policy of international spying, on the one hand, and the policy of 'cash and violence', on the other, which constitute the heinous politics of the US rulers to anyhow stoke up war and dissension. The people of our country realized this during the last Indo-Pak war at their cost. On the one hand, they incited Pakistan, helped it with money and armaments, helped it in planning, while, on the other, the CIA furnished India with all sorts of information on Pakistan. Because, two motives of theirs were behind this. First, they would be able to exert political control and dominance over both the countries and, second, they would be able to release some of their stockpiled armaments. If they cannot do this the USA with all might will sink into a deeper crisis. Such is the picture of crisis of the economy of the USA itself, the doyen of the capitalist world.

And, in this situation, those who say here that wealth and production of the country can be continuously increased and the people's distress can be removed even while keeping intact the capitalist production relation and capitalist state structure of India are not students of sociology, neither of history nor of economics. They are not students of anything. Either they know nothing or they are motivated devils. So the fundamental question before the Indian emancipation movement lies here. Capitalism is crisis-ridden. In order to ensure industrial development, to enlarge scope of education in India and to solve its food problem by continuously increasing production two-fold, four-fold through radical land reforms and mechanization of agriculture, the door of Indian industrial revolution is to be opened. But that door is locked by the capitalist rule, the capitalist social and economic system. Such in outline is the present crisis in Indian capitalist economy. Without overthrowing it and replacing it with a socialist system free from exploitation, common people cannot escape the miseries and deprivations.

Basic injustice in capitalist society

Besides, I wish to draw your attention to another injustice which is basic to the capitalist social system. What was the character of human labour some five hundred years back, before capitalism had developed? People laboured to produce for their own consumption. And they also used to produce an extra quantum — that too for exchange with other things, for their own consumption. It means that ownership of the productive force, of the labour power of the common people rested with them. In contrast, the working people of today, whether the intellectual workers, manual labourers, peasants, or, say, the professors — they are not the owners of their labour power. Their labour power has been transformed into a commodity of the capitalist market. Its ownership is in the hands of the capitalists, who buy or sell it, and dictate the terms on which the workers are obliged to sell their labour. So what has become the character of the labour power of the common people? They no longer toil to produce for themselves. Their labour is embodied in production for society. In that sense, the labour of the working people has become social in nature. Its character is social. Is it for their own consumption that the capitalist owners organize production? No, they produce to sell it in the market. In other words, the owners in this society produce as per the demand of the market in order to gain maximum profit, although their public claim is that this production is made with the object of meeting the needs of the people, that is, production is for catering to the social needs.

So the point is that production in our country today has acquired a social character, whether in the case of agricultural produce or in industry. The character of production has become social. For this, the character of the labour power of those who produce has become social too, whereas, the ownership of production has remained individual. Then this special feature that the production and labour power have become social in character whereas ownership remains individual in character — is the root cause of both the basic inconsistency and all unjust acts and injustices. And, you see, the function of the law and order machinery is precisely to protect the right of the individual to appropriate, that is, the right of the individual to appropriate the wealth generated by social labour power, the right to property, or the right to individual ownership. Hence I am arguing that the main plank upon which stands the structure of law and order is nothing but social injustice. That is, the concept of justice on which the law and order structure is based in our country basically stands upon this social injustice and discrimination. The character of labour is social. The worker produces for the society, he works for society but the ownership is individual. To protect the right to this individual ownership is the basic principle of law and order in our country. Is it founded on justice? Or, it is founded on social injustice?

Origin and evolution of ethics, jurisprudence and concept of law and order

That is why I made an observation at the public meeting at the Maidan of Calcutta on 24th April last⁵, which has set off considerable commotion. What I said was that every student of law and jurisprudence knows that whatever is legal may not always be just, rational and humane. Again illegality in the eye of the prevailing law does not automatically render a thing unjust, irrational and inhuman.

All who are conversant with the principle of jurisprudence, who know the history of how jurisprudence evolved and how its principles are ever changing, growing and developing, know how the bourgeois secular humanist state and its present concept of law and order gradually evolved in history in the course of struggle against feudalism. Moreover, any student of ethics should know that man or the human society did not evolve to suit the prevailing sense of justice and law and order, rather the concepts of justice and law and order developed to cater to the needs of progress and advancement of human society.

A study of the history of evolution of society reveals that the concept of ethics and values, on the basis of which a particular social system with its law and order structure once evolved to cater to the needs of social advancement and development, although it satisfies the needs of the then society, that particular concept of ethics and values, social justice and structure of law and order become reduced to a privilege in the hands of a few in course of time and turn reactionary. As a result, a new sense of values, concept of ethics and social justice arise within society in the very interest of social progress and on the basis of newer necessity. The conflict between the old sense of values, ethics and concept of social justice with the new sense of values, ethics and concept of social justice which grow in the interest of social progress is in reality a conflict with the old social system and its law and order, a struggle to establish a new social system with its law and order structure based upon the new sense of values, ethics and concept of social justice. Through the process of such conflicts and struggle the concept of human values, ethics and the concept of law and order based upon these have continually changed in different ages till these reached what we find today. In this way the slave-master society once broke up and feudalism arose. Again, when the ideas of capitalist revolution and bourgeois democracy started arising within the womb of feudalism, man's revolutionary feeling developed against the whole structure of feudal concept of law and order, ethics, justice and religion-oriented considerations. Even though this revolutionary attitude was directed against the then prevalent law and order, it was moral, legitimate and justified. And who provided leadership to the struggle then? The then bourgeois leaders struggling to establish bourgeois society that we see today. Those who are today crying hoarse to uphold law and order, it is their predecessors who had raised the voice against feudalism at that time, saying: tear into shreds whatever is not rational, even if those might be in conformity with the law. Why did they say so? Because, the feudal sense of values, ethics and social justice were against the interest of the majority of the society, and in that sense it was against the interest of social progress.

Law and order of present society serves interest of capitalist class

The laws and the law and order structure in the present society are complementary to the capitalist class rule, having been framed to protect the capitalist class rule and their right, in whatever form, to protect individual ownership of the social wealth. The capitalist economic system and state structure stands today as the hindrance blocking the path of social progress. So, the sense of values, ethics and social justice on which the present structure of law and order in

this society stands has now been reduced to a privilege in the hands of the capitalist class for perpetuating its class rule and class exploitation. Hence, with docility, no progressive individual can abide by the law and order in this society which is founded upon social injustice. To claim oneself as an adherent of democracy and a standard bearer of progress, and at the same time to be afraid of supporting the democratic mass movements developed upon the new sense of ethics, values and social justice — this cannot go on.

Nationalization of industries under capitalism is not socialism

Another point needs to be discussed. A group of intellectuals in our country are loud to claim, seeing that state-owned industries are being set up, that this is socialism. But nationalization of industries in a capitalist state does not lead to establishment of socialism. Yet it is in this way that the Congressites are trying to make the people believe that they are gradually advancing towards socialism. This is a big hoax. The intelligentsia ought to understand that the character of the ownership, whether individual or state, does not by itself conclusively determine whether the system is capitalist or socialist. Marx characterized capitalism by its motive of production and the production relation: in capitalism the motive of production is to earn maximum profit and the production relation is the owner-worker relationship. Consider, for instance, the state-owned industries in our country. In these the workers have no say in the employment policy or in the production planning. The workers do not decide how the industry would be managed or what would be the wage policy of the government. This means, the motive of production remains earning maximum profit as before, and the owner-worker relationship, too, remains unchanged. The workers would just continue to raise their demands and fight for them, as they used to do against individual owners.

Nationalization under the capitalist system does not mean social ownership. On the contrary, it reflects the aggregate interest of capitalism. It provides an additional advantage to capitalist exploitation. What is it exactly? When an individual owner commits an injustice the people get easily antagonized with him. And when injustice is perpetrated by the state-owned industries in the aggregate interest of capitalism it is given a sugar coating by projecting these industries as national property, national wealth. People are exhorted to tighten their belts and accept hardship in the interest of national wealth — because this wealth belongs to the nation. That is why the great leader of the proletariat, Frederik Engels, said that state-owned industry in the capitalist society is the most inhuman, most ruthless exploiter, because it has got a colouring that is 'national', but in reality that is not true at all.

Revolutionaries organize only such reform movements as are conducive to revolution

Therefore, it is self-deception as well as deceiving others to hold that this capitalist social system and state structure would remain and we would try to reform it, would try to do planning within this set-up and try to bring about people's well-being. Struggles for reform may be there and also struggles to secure relief in the interest of the people. But these must have a clear-cut objective — that the movement for these reform and relief programmes should pave the way of anti-capitalist socialist revolution of India and not prove to be hindrance to it, that this movement would not create illusion about the capitalist system and its Parliament, it would rather help to dispel the confusions and illusions of the people. Revolutionaries extend support to reform movements only if they are conducted in this manner and our party, too, supports such movements. Reforms which do not help to strengthen the revolutionary struggle constitute a self-deception, a bourgeois device to keep the people's militancy subdued for some time with sugar

quoted talks. On the occasion of 15th August we wish to reiterate these points to remind the people about these again and again.

Revolution is for ensuring unfettered development of production

People will have to conduct the struggle for emancipation of the masses with twin objects in view — protecting the independence that has been won and conducting all-round and relentless preparatory work for revolution. To think that there is no necessity for the emancipation of masses or revolution just because political independence has been achieved is not the correct understanding. Those who hold that revolution means creating trouble in the country, disrupting production or destroying it and hampering the progress of the country, are liars. Because, revolution does not mean hampering production. On the contrary, the object of revolution is to free production from recession and the crises which are the inevitable outcome of the capitalist system, to free science and technology from the tentacles of the capitalist profit motive. Revolution is a historical necessity to free the productive force from the inherent general economic crisis of capitalism caused by the greed of the capitalists, the consequent market crisis generated by their motive to earn maximum profit by exploiting the workers — and in the process to open up the road of continuous augmentation of production. A temporary disruption in production during revolution comes about because the bourgeois state and the agents of the bourgeoisie obstruct revolution by armed and violent means. So, this temporary disruption in production during this period of turmoil in no way proves that the object of revolutionary struggle is to hamper production. Rather the very object of the revolutionary movement is to free the production process from its stunted condition. Whereas, those who resist revolution do so because they are unwilling to open the road to unobstructed progress of production. And it is this resistance that further hampers production during revolution. So to obstruct production is never the object of any organized revolutionary struggle. The object of revolutionary movement is to free the productive forces from the vicious cycle of the capitalist greed and profit motive in order to open up the road to unobstructed growth of production.

Build people's revolutionary consciousness and organizational base

Now you see, simple clamouring for revolution will not help it to materialize. For that, it is necessary to gradually build people's legitimate democratic mass movements on the correct base political line against all sorts of exploitation, oppression, repression and injustice. Through conduct of these struggles people's revolutionary organizational base and their own instruments of struggle have to be built. A correct understanding about the revolutionary leadership has to be developed among the revolutionary masses. The vast masses positioned between the pro-revolution forces and the anti-revolution reactionary forces have to be rallied in support of revolution and their mentality oriented towards the revolutionary objective. In steadfastly conducting the revolutionary struggle of the masses constant care has to be exercised to prevent sporadic outbursts and adventurist tactical lines before proper preparation for revolution which may lead to erosion of revolutionary strength. To accomplish all this, it is an indispensable task of the leading force of the revolutionary struggles of our country to lay bare all the trickeries of the political propaganda of the ruling capitalist class and its hirelings.

Bourgeoisie, too, adopt reform measures which help their class interest

As, for example, the bourgeoisie preach among people that what is legitimate has to be legal at the same time. Otherwise, they argue, the rule of law loses all its meaning. This propaganda

speaks both of hollowness and an evil motive of theirs. Because, if it is so that nothing can be legitimate if not legal, then there can be no meaning of using the word legitimate independent of it. But legitimacy is a concept in use and the bourgeoisie, too, have to take recourse to it. They, too, have to reform and amend from time to time the laws of their social system and way of life in order to meet the demands of their own concept of justice and morals, if the measures adopted do not harm their basic class interest. For instance, they have reformed the Hindu Marriage Act. Now some people are voicing a demand that the marriage act of Muslims be changed, because this act is not in conformity with the concept of democracy that has already developed. While the previous Hindu Marriage Act gave one the right to have five wives, the bourgeois sense of morals denounces it as immoral, ugly and obscene. Consequently, it is not legitimate. Even in the ordinary sense of bourgeois democracy it is not legitimate. This led to amending the Hindu Marriage Act. Because this reform measure is in conformity with the concept of justice and morals of bourgeois democracy, it does not harm the basic class interest of the bourgeoisie. The concept of justice and morals came into conflict with the prevailing law, and the law itself has been amended in this case. But when in the interest of social progress a new concept of justice and morals comes into conflict with the bourgeois class interest, then the bourgeoisie try to gag this voice on the plea of illegality. They fall back on the logic that because it is the law of the land so it has to be abided by. Is governance possible without the enforcement of law?

Give support to legitimate democratic mass movements

In this situation, if the United Front government wants to conduct itself with the correct attitude of social justice and fair administration, if it wants to overcome the internal pressures of the capitalist state, its task becomes one to firmly extend support to all legitimate democratic mass movements and back them up even if they go against the prevailing laws. Whether a movement over some demands is legitimate, rational and humane has to be judged on the sole yardstick of whether it is conducive to the interest of the majority of the people and complementary to the cause of social progress. If a mass movement is just and rational on that yardstick but is in conflict with the prevailing laws then the laws have to be changed. And whatever obstacles and hurdles may come up before the attempt to change the laws — then the democratic mass movements directed toward breaking the obstruction have to be backed up with all possible efforts. The law which has become a privilege in the hands of the capitalist class, an instrument of privilege in the hands of the privileged section, and has lost all its vestiges of progressive social character — how can obedience to it or its glorification help make justice to triumph? Then, how can change of law be brought about on the basis of a new concept of justice and morals? Then, how can new laws be framed in favour of people's interest? So, it is imperative to create strong pressure of public opinion through development of legitimate democratic mass movements in order to change the anti-people laws. It must be admitted that the force of public opinion acts on the administration, on the legislators, on those also who sit in judgement. If the pressure of public opinion cannot be created, even the interpretations of progressive laws do not conform to justice and morals, nor do they conduce to and complement the people's interest. So whoever stands for democracy and progress must also extend support to people's legitimate democratic movements, even if these do not conform to the prevailing laws. Otherwise, democracy loses its real meaning. Short of it, democracy becomes objectively equal to pleading for sustaining the bourgeois class rule, using legality as an alibi. It becomes tantamount to crying hoarse over legality like all tyrants did through the ages, bypassing the question of whether the prevailing laws are just and moral or not. Pleading for the laws in force,

a section of political leaders is all engaged to argue, just like the oppressive rulers of all ages, that no movements going against the laws, even if legitimate, can be supported from the seat of governmental power. That is to say, you can debate and deliberate on 'whatever is legal may not be legitimate', but this cannot be the guiding principle for the ministers and the government to act. This logic boils down to arguing that those in the seat of governance are not entitled to humane acts because they are in government. It is the same as claiming that only those qualify to be in government who are used to carrying out inhuman activities. What does it come to? In the opinion of this section, they are the good and firm administrators who are capable of running the rule of law and its steamroller on the people, no matter if those are laws of tyrants and laws inimical to people's interests. I say, if this be the essence of running the government then it may not be moral to participate in that government.

It is in people's interest that bureaucracy is to be controlled

People are to be shown another thing from the seat of government. The bourgeois agents say, the government is all powerful. So, what is the need for revolution? They say that, with an alien theory borrowed from abroad, some red flag-bearers are trying to engineer a civil war within the country, but there is no need for revolution. Because, they argue, there is adult franchise in our country. People, if they only so desire, can install a government of their choice, and as if that government can enact, if it so desires, such laws which will protect the interest of the people. The police are under control of the government; the military too is under control of the central government; the administrators, the secretaries, too, are under the control of the government. We have all along held this to be a blatant lie. In reality, the state is ruled by its three organs — the police, the military and the judiciary in unison. And the ministers of the government are impotent leaders without any actual power. These impotent leaders act as agents of these organs, as agents of the bureaucracy and so the bureaucrats, too, fawn on them. And those ministers, who are devoid of any sense, think themselves all-powerful. But these ministers do not know that if they go to control bureaucracy, or if they try forcefully to act in a way which will go against the interest of the police officers and the capitalist class, it would at once expose how much power the government wields. The recent incidents at the Howrah police station have proved how much power the government wields. An officer of the police station revolted, he assaulted the District Magistrate, and even after disobeying the order of the minister he is sitting tight and secure. What is more, he seeks protection of the court. Such is the power of our government! So I say that the illusion that everything can be done from the seat of government has to be smashed from the seat of government itself. Fearlessly the United Front will have to use its power, to the extent vested according to Constitution, to fully control bureaucracy in the interest of the people. On this question, it must not budge under the pressure of bureaucracy. The police must most resolutely be compelled to pursue the progressive policies of the government. The legitimate democratic mass movements must be kept fully free from the interference of the police. Whether we can remain in government or not, and for how long while pursuing these policies — none of these questions must confuse us. If the United Front government can accomplish this task, however much the pressure from the capitalist class, the police, the bureaucracy and the central government, then only it would really be acting in the interest of the people. Otherwise, by trampling upon the trust of the people, it would ultimately do extreme treachery to the interest of the people.

It is the interest of capitalists that laws protect under the capitalist order

We have to accomplish another important task. The bourgeois hirelings say that all are equal in the eye of law. This, too, is a lie. It is only on paper that law applies equally to all in a class divided society. In reality, law is a mockery for the common people. The legal benefit is derived by the capitalists. In this society, law actually protects the capitalists. A handful of owners are committing mischiefs, thousands of people are crying for redressal. The administrative machinery of the whole country, the media propaganda, and the central government, too, are behind these few owners. To them country equates these handful of owners. And the workers who are producing and creating the wealth of the country are nobody. So the laws of the country are ultimately for protecting the interest of the capitalist class, these are not for protecting the interest of the workers. Peasants are getting beaten to death, countless families are being brought to ruins — there is no need to protect them, law and police have nothing abiding to do to protect them. But when common peasants build up a movement against the oppression of a jotedar and the jotedar feels endangered, at once the sword of law falls on the peasants on the plea that a citizen's life and property are in danger. This is the real face of "law and order" of this country. Yet the so-called intelligentsia of our country have been pleading so much for the same law and order. So, while conducting mass movements, the people are to be made conscious about the real character of the "law and order" of our country.

Socialist revolution only way to emancipation

From all these it follows that the emancipation of the people from the capitalist yoke and the oppressive capitalist system will be impossible to achieve through change of government a thousand times, through elections, or through attempts to rewrite the letters of the laws. The only way to achieve emancipation is to gradually build up the invincible revolutionary united strength of the people through conduct of democratic movements on the correct base political line and to accomplish socialist revolution under the leadership of the revolutionary working class party. There is no other way for emancipation of the people besides this. All other ways entail only wastage of time and self-deception.

Long Live Revolution !

*Speech on August 15, 1967.
First published in Ganadabi,
the Bengali organ of the party
on September 4, 1967.
The title has since been revised.*

NOTES

1. A pioneer of Indian freedom movement.
2. Mahatma Gandhi (Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi).
3. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India.
4. A crore equals ten millions.
5. 1967.