

CPI(M)'S NINTH CONGRESS

The Ninth Congress of the CPI (M) recently held in Madurai had adopted a political resolution and an organisational report. For proper understanding of CPI(M) politics, it is necessary to carefully examine the resolution and the report in the light of Marxism-Leninism. We propose to do it sometime later when the final documents officially published by the party will be available. For the present we like to confine ourselves to some comments on certain observations reported to have been made by some CPI (M) leaders.

Is West Bengal a colony of Delhi? Newspaper reporters pointedly asked Mr. P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the CPI (M), this question. In reply, Mr. Sundarayya is reported to have declared: "We the Marxists, never said so. There is no such slogan in any of our party programmes. We never said so about West Bengal either." (*Hindusthan Standard* dated 2nd July, 1972) Had this assertion by the CPI (M) General Secretary been factually true, no one would have been more happy than us. But, unfortunately, it is not so. Not only CPI (M) leaders had said it hundreds of times in their election speeches before the people of West Bengal, it is there in print in their party organ as well. In fact, the slogan that West Bengal is a colony of Delhi has been advanced by the West Bengal State Committee of the CPI (M) officially. We are putting up concrete evidences in support of our above statement.

Firstly, please look at the *Resolution On Election* adopted by the West Bengal State Conference of the CPI(M) at Midnapore held on and from 16th to 20th January, 1972. The text of the resolution was published in the Bengali organ of the party, namely, *Desh Hitaishi* dated 28th January, 1972. The relevant portion runs as follows: "They (the ruling Congress—Editor, P.E) are taking the economy of West Bengal along the road to ruination, destroying all noble traditions of West Bengal and are conspiring to convert West Bengal into a colony of

autocratic Centre." (emphasis ours—Editor, P.E.) Secondly, look at the article entitled "**Is West Bengal a Colony of New Delhi?**" written by the well-known CPI (M) leader, Mr. Niren Ghosh and published in the same CPI (M) Bengali organ dated 25th February, 1972. In this article we find the following observation of the party: "The State Conference of our Party at Midnapore has correctly said that Delhi has reduced West Bengal to its colony for all practical purposes." We can cite numerous other instances to establish that the CPI(M) had actually advanced the slogan stating that West Bengal is a colony of Delhi but to avoid repetition we satisfy ourselves with these two documentary evidences only. In the face of these stubborn facts it is a travesty of truth to claim, as the CPI(M) General Secretary has claimed, that the CPI (M) had never said that "West Bengal is a colony of Delhi."

It may not be out of place to quote what we had said about this slogan by the CPI(M). "...Promode Babu (Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(M)—Editor, P.E.) tries to fan up parochial sentiment by such utterances as West Bengal is a colony of the Centre and this he does with a view to taking maximum advantage in election. It is one thing to develop united democratic movement against the Centre for the fulfilment of just demands of West Bengal but it is quite a different thing to fan up local and parochial sentiment for winning elections. To one

(Contd. to Page 2)

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West Bengal Land Reforms (Second Amendment) Act. 1972 Lower Middle Peasants Fleeced to Fatten Jotedars

Calcutta, July 6—The Chief Minister of West Bengal and other leaders of the ruling Congress party have been loudly claiming that their aim is to greatly improve the condition of landless, poor and middle peasants in the State. According to them, during the last three and a half months' rule by the ruling Congress many concrete steps have been taken in that direction.

This claim by the ruling Congress and its leaders must be critically examined in the background of their actual deeds. It is an admitted fact that there are about 6 lakh bargadar families (this is an under-estimate by the official circle) in West Bengal. By and large, they are landless and/or extremely poor peasants with small plots of land anyhow eking out their existence from the produce of the land they cultivate on share-cropping system. Any government, which sincerely desires to improve the condition of landless and poor peasants, therefore, cannot but protect bargadars from eviction from the land they cultivate. But what is the record of the present ruling Congress Government in the state in this regard? So far as our information goes, about 50 thousand bargadars have been unlawfully evicted

during the last three months and a half by local jotedars backed by armed ruling Congress hoodlums, R. G. Party personnel and the police.

It is not we alone who are making this charge. The unlawful eviction of bargadars during the last three and a half months has assumed so alarming a proportion that the Congress MLA's coming from rural areas could not help strongly criticising even their own government on the floor of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly at the time of discussion on the state budget for not taking any action to stop this large-scale eviction. The CPI, which is more loyal than the king in their attitude towards the ruling Congress and the state Government, also had to come out with sarcastic

(Contd. to page 4)

Robot-Like Behaviour Of

(Contd. from page 1)

well acquainted with CPI (M) politics it is nothing new. In the past also it had been seen that the CPI (M) shook off all principles and took to parochialism with the sole object of expanding the party by hook or crook. It had been seen that the CPI (M) fanned Assamese sentiment in Assam and Bengali sentiment in West Bengal from a narrow pragmatic consideration. In Tamil Nadu and Punjab the CPI (M) supports the parochial demand of the DMK and the Akali Dal respectively, since they fear isolation and extinction if they go against the current of local and parochial sentiment. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the CPI(M) in their excessive zeal to be on the bandwagon of these parochial parties does not hesitate to characterize these parties as progressive but when it becomes impossible to make unity with them, the CPI (M) cries hoarse calling these very parties reactionary whom they had characterized as progressive a few days back. This very political exigency is promoting the CPI (M) to rouse local and parochial sentiment even though it vitiates the whole political atmosphere of the country and strikes at the root of the unity of the Indian people. This is indeed a serious danger. As such, the rank and file of the CPI (M) must be on their guard so as to restrain their leaders from pursuing such suicidal policy of disrupting the unity of the Indian people which is so essential for the success of the Indian revolution." (Proletarian Era dated 15th July, 1971). This observation by us testifies further to the fact that the CPI(M) had been saying that "West Bengal is a colony of Delhi" even in 1971 much before their state conference at Midnapore gave official seal to this slogan in January, 1972. In fact, in

the election speeches of CPI (M) leaders before the mid-term election in 1971 in the state this slogan occupied the central focal point.

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The *Statesman* in its issue dated 1st July, 1972, reports: "About the party's style of activities, although the emphasis continued to be on unity of democratic forces, the delegates apparently took note of the disastrous results of the United Front experience in 1969 in West Bengal where the CPI (M), in implementing the political resolution adopted at the previous Congress, emphasized the expansion of the party more than united action. The political report in recognition of the adverse effects caused by emphasis on the party's independent growth now says: "The militant mass movement requires that our party adopts a proper political approach towards parties, organizations, groups and individuals who can be brought into these struggles.""

This by implications is an admission by the CPI (M) leadership that the CPI (M) had not "proper political approach towards parties, organizations, groups and individuals who can be brought into" united struggles against the common enemy and that the CPI (M) in its over-zealousness to expand the party by all means worked against the United Front and united struggles against vested interests and reactionary forces in West Bengal in 1969. This is exactly what our Party had been saying all through. But the CPI(M) did not care to listen to our friendly advice, but, on the contrary, carried on a campaign of slander and hate against us. Better late than never. It is a good sign that the CPI(M) has admitted, though not openly but by implication, their past mis-

takes in their approach to United Front of left democratic forces and united struggles against common enemy of the people.

When the Central Committee of the CPI (M) in a session from 24th to 29th August, 1971 at Bangalore adopted a resolution urging on the necessity of democratic unity, our Party hailed the resolution. We then said, "Judged in the background of their (the CPI(M)'s —Editor, P. E) so-called theory of "class-based front" and fancied belief that the united front of left and democratic parties had become outdated due to intensification of class struggle, the present stance of the CPI(M) is a sign of departure and a step in the right direction. But has the CPI(M) viewed correctly the necessity of united front of left and democratic parties in the present phase of democratic movement and have they given up their left-sectarian and disruptive politics which disrupted the united fronts and brought about the downfall of UF governments in Kerala and West Bengal? Do they genuinely realize the necessity of united front in the prevailing condition in our country? Do they understand that in the present phase of democratic movement in our country the role of united front is not yet exhausted? Do they know that united front is a historical necessity and not created out of any fond imagination of any party? Are they aware that had they been a truly revolutionary working class party then their foremost task would have been to keep alive and united the united front as a formidable weapon of democratic mass movements so long as the role of other parties representing different classes other than the working class and still having influence over a considerable section of the toiling people is not completely exhausted? So long as the broad masses

of the toiling people will be suffering from bourgeois parliamentary reformist illusions and the various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois liberal democratic parties will continue to exercise influence over the masses, it is only through the formation of united front of those left and democratic parties who still have a positive role, however vacillating, in the democratic movement that an instrument of mass struggle against reactionary forces and vested interests can be created. It is only with the help of this instrument that legitimate struggles of the democratic masses can be built up and gradually raised to higher and still higher level and the increasing fascist offensives by the Indira Government against our people effectively repulsed. While carrying on these struggles, a revolutionary working class party would, at the same time, conduct relentless ideological struggles against other partners of the front to expose their real reformist character and gradually isolate them from the masses in such a way as not to, in any way, weaken the unity of the front and disturb united struggles against the main common enemy. It is only on the basis of the principle of 'unity-struggle-unity' that the united front can properly function the bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties can be isolated from the masses of the people, toiling masses brought under political and organisational influence of the revolutionary working class party and the leadership of the revolutionary working class party established. Only at this stage the historical necessity of the united front of left and democratic parties is exhausted and a new type of front, proletarian united front, emerges. But did the CPI(M) which claims themselves to be a revolutionary working class party exhibit in their behaviour this

So-Called Communist Parties

outlook on UF politics? The answer is a big No. It is the CPI(M) which, due to their narrow sectarian and left-opportunistic politics, destroyed the UF which was gradually taking shape and emerging as the only instrument of building and developing democratic movements in West Bengal and Kerala. On the one hand, out of their pragmatic consideration of **anyhow** expanding the party, the CPI(M) most nakedly utilised the administration and the police for petty party interests, carried on violent attacks on political opponents and members and supporters of the fraternal constituent parties of the front, admitted anti-social elements into the party, indulged in big party chauvinism, carried on hate campaign against other partners of the front and thereby destroyed the unity of the front and, on the other hand, the CPI(M) under the smoke-screen of the slogan of "intensify the class struggle" actually went whole hog to win favour of big industrial houses, like the Birlas, big jotedars, top bureaucrats and their tribe, the enemies of the people." (**Proletarian Era** dated 15th November, 1971).

Had the CPI(M) then behaved properly, there would have been no chance of the ruling Congress now coming to power in West Bengal. The UF and the UF Government in the state would have continued and the people would have been saved from the present fascistic attacks on them by the ruling Congress. But infatuated by the desire to **anyhow** expand the party, they threw to the winds all principles and democratic norms of behaviour. They refused to take note of the lesson from history that influence and expansion of the party secured through the backing of the administration and the police or through violence and terror could not be stable.

It is only through the conduction of relentless ideological struggles, painstaking process of politically educating the masses and thereby winning them over that a party can establish and expand its influence over the people. They refused to see the necessity of enforcing strict administrative neutrality when in governmental power. It did not strike them that use of the administrative and the police machinery for sectarian party interest would have a boomerang effect. When out of governmental power, the ruling class and its representative, the ruling Congress, would use the same machinery against left democratic parties and democratic mass movement with greater ferocity. Now all the left democratic parties and united mass movement in West Bengal are paying extremely high price for these sins of the CPI(M). May be, the CPI(M), being the largest party among them, is bearing the brunt of fascistic attacks by the ruling Congress hoodlums backed by the administration and the police in West Bengal. But other left democratic parties also are not being spared by the ruling Congress. These attacks can only be effectively met, if all the left democratic parties in the state unite and develop united struggles of the people for the restoration of democracy. This calls for, on the part of the CPI(M), a complete break with their past wrong sectarian line which manifested itself in their wrong approach to united front and united struggles and adoption of a new line conducive to the proper functioning of the united front and development of united struggles against the common enemy. Mere lip service to united front and united struggle without real break with the wrong line of the past will do no good. We look forward to the day when this change

will really come.

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Mr. B.T. Ranadive, top ideologist of the CPI(M), is reported by the **Statesman** (issue dated 28th June, 1972) to have remarked in a critical reference to the Soviet Union and China as follows: "In pursuance of the short-term needs of their foreign policies, they seek to impose upon the communist and workers' parties in the former colonial countries such policies as lead to their liquidation and merger with the parties sponsored by the ruling regime or virtually make them obedient adjuncts." How far the Soviet Union and China have sought to impose their lines on communist and workers' parties in the former colonial countries against their will is yet to be established by Mr. Ranadive, stating his case with particular reference to concrete facts. If it is true, as told by Mr. Ranadive, that the Soviet Union and China had sought to impose their policies on others, why did other communist and workers' parties agree to such an imposition? No communist party, however big and powerful, can impose any policy of its own on any other communist party, unless the latter submits to the will of the former. The communist party of any particular country in a spirit of proletarian internationalism may give some comradely suggestions as to what the communist party of another country should or should not do in a particular case. In that case it is for the communist party of the other country to examine the suggestions given by the communist party of the former country on the basis of concrete conditions of their own country, and, accordingly, accept or reject them. The communist party of the former country cannot reasonably expect that their suggestions would be accepted

by the communist party of the latter country blindly, without examining if the suggestions were suited to the concrete conditions of the latter country, just like a robot. But this is also an objective reality that the political parties going by the name communist in our country have been behaving all through as robots, parroting the words of this or that communist party abroad and blindly copying their lines. These so-called communist parties here have never used their brains to think for themselves and acquire an accurate knowledge of the position of different classes in India through serious and independent investigation and study and concretise Marxism-Leninism on the soil. This is the history of the undivided CPI whose top ideologist was Mr. Ranadive, of the present CPI, of the CPI(M) and of the CPI(ML). Who does not know that the CPI(M), after it was formed, like the undivided CPI, blindly followed the line of the Chinese Communist Party? It is only after the CPI(M), inspite of their best efforts to remain in good book, fell in disgrace in the estimation of the Chinese Communist Party and was virtually left alone without any international recognition that Mr. Ranadive and the CPI(M) have started talking of independent line and accusing the Soviet Union and China of attempts to impose their lines on other communist parties. This 'grapes-are-sour' mentality will not help the CPI(M) in finding out the real cause as to why they behaved as robots of either the Communist Party of the Soviet Union or the Communist Party of China, as the case may be and, hence, overcoming their mistakes.

What accounts for
(Contd. to Page 6)

C P I (M)'S Ninth Congress

(Contd. from Page 3)

robot-like behaviour of these parties? Lack of understanding of the dialectical relationship that governs the mutual relationship between different communist parties as also that between the leading communist party and other communist parties. It is not that the leading communist party will decide on every question and the business of all other communist parties is to give blind support to the stand of the leading communist party. *"The relationship between different Communist parties is governed by the dialectical principle of 'unity-struggle-unity' on the basis of new understanding of values of life fundamentally different from humanistic moral values and cemented by common aims and objectives of world proletarian revolution and establishment of world communist society"*, as put by Com. Shibdas Ghosh, our beloved leader and teacher and General Secretary of our Party. **(On Steps Taken By CPSU Against Stalin)**. Does Mr. Ranadive realize it?

In this connection Com. Ghosh, one of the leading Marxist-Leninist thinkers of the day, further said: "Due to formalistic process of thinking, there prevails a confusion in the matter of understanding the relation of the foreign policy" of the USSR, or China directed from the state plane "with the programme of international proletarian revolution. Most of the communist parties consider the two as one and the same. This is grossly erroneous". There is no denying that the foreign policy of the USSR or China or any other socialist country and the programme of international proletarian revolution should supplement each other yet there is a contradiction between them. The aim of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union as a socialist country should be

"to consolidate the forces of socialism, create further and deeper antagonism between the imperialists capitalists themselves, isolate the less adventurists in the Imperialist War Camp from the more adventurists, defend and maintain world peace and thereby create favourable objective conditions for the growth, development and success of world proletarian revolution. The aim of the programme of world proletarian revolution is to provide the general guiding line for successful revolution in different countries. The duty of the communist parties in colonies, semi-colonies and metropolitan countries is to creatively apply this general line in their respective countries. It is none of their business to parrot the foreign policy of the USSR or the general line of the international communist forum blindly. Dialectics teaches us to study the contradiction of the particular with the general. Every serious communist knows that the general policy of the international communist forum gives the general guiding principle which is to be applied differently to different countries. Concrete analysis of concrete conditions which differ from country to country and concrete application of the general guiding principle in different countries with different objective conditions are the living soul of Marxism. Without them Marxism would become a dogma. It is because of difference in concrete conditions in different countries that there exists a contradiction between the general programme of international proletarian revolution and the particular programme of revolution in a given country. Anyone who loses sight of this contradiction between the general and the particular commits the error of formalism. This being the relation between the general

Price Fixation of Raw Jute

Sometime back the Agricultural Prices Commission recommended that the minimum support price for raw jute per quintal should be fixed at Rs. 115, which comes to Rs. 43.20 per maund, for delivery at Calcutta. The up country prices would be such as would be determined by the Jute Corporation of India.

The prices so fixed by the Commission are most unjustified, inasmuch as they do not meet even the expenses incurred by jute-growers to produce raw jute. It is for this reason that the two and a half lakh workers employed in jute mills through their trade unions and the six lakh jute-growers through peasants' organisations in West Bengal strongly protested against this arbitrary fixation of minimum support price of raw jute by the Agricultural Prices Commission and demanded its upward revision to at least Rs. 60 a maund in West Bengal.

It is known to all that jute-growers are worst victims of exploitation by the jute barons in our country, who control the jute industry, and their *benamdar* agents who purchase jute and

work as intermediary between jute industry and jute-growers. These jute barons and their agents, most unscrupulous in their transactions, not only fleece poor jute-growers to the utmost but also cheat the Government in matters of taxes and foreign exchange earnings and have brought the industry on to the verge of ruination. This being the reality continuing for decades, the Government ought to have accepted the modest and most justified demand of jute-growers and jute workers and fixed the minimum support price for raw jute at Rs. 60 a maund. But, in spite of the slogan of 'garibi hatao' and lip service to 'socialism', the Government of India, true to its anti-people stand in every matter, has accepted the recommendation of the

(Contd. to page 8)

programme of world proletarian revolution adopted by the international communist forum and the particular programme of revolution of a communist party in a given country, it is only scientific to conclude that there are contradictions between the foreign policy of the USSR and the programme of revolution of a communist party in a given country. Lack of understanding of the contradiction between the general and the particular and that between the foreign policy of the USSR and the programme of revolution of communist parties in their respective countries had even at the time of Stalin's leadership converted most of the communist parties into robots. The position has not improved much since then. Whatever may be the

strength of a robot, it can never apply the general policy of world revolution creatively in its own country and lead the masses to revolution and power. The history of the Communist Party of India is the history of such robot-like activities. The international communist leadership cannot be absolved of its defects for this state of affairs." (Ibid)

The above analysis by Com. Ghosh provides a scientific theoretical explanation as to why different 'communist' parties in the world behave as tame yes-men of the Soviet or the Chinese Communist Party. Mr. Ranadive should try to catch the real point. Otherwise mere anti-Soviet or anti-China utterances by him will not, in the long run, save the CPI(M).